



Ulnar Nerve Release at the Elbow

Post-Operative Orders

Dr. Abigail Hamilton, MD

You received a block and light sedation. Please rest and relax the day of surgery. Be aware of possible dizziness and exercise caution when you are on your feet. **A responsible adult must be with you for the first 24 hours following surgery for safety.**

- Do not drive for 24 hours after surgery or while using narcotic pain medication.
- Do not operate power machinery.
- No important decision-making or signing of legal documents for 24 hours.
- Do not use alcoholic beverages for 24 hours or while taking narcotic medications.
- If you are unable to urinate, feel uncomfortable and it has been 8-10 hours since you last urinated, go to an urgent care or an emergency room

Diet:

- Eat your usual diet. Start with something light like soup or crackers.

Brace:

- You may remove your brace carefully for hygiene but keep arm supported. Otherwise, brace must be worn at all times locked in 90 degrees of flexion until adjusted by your physician or therapist.

Activity:

- Please start gentle wrist flexion and extension range of motion exercises as well as finger ROM after block has worn off as this will help with swelling. Do these exercises 3 times a day for 5-10 minutes at a time
- You may ice the surgical elbow at any time to help with pain control and swelling

Medications:

- Resume all your home medicines.

- You will be prescribed a short acting narcotic for home (oxycodone, dilaudid, percocet or norco). Please take this as needed.
 - If you are prescribed oxycodone or dilaudid, it is OK to take Tylenol with this medication and doing so will help with pain.
 - If you are prescribed Percocet or Norco, these medications already contain Tylenol, and you should not take Tylenol while you are taking these medications.
- Pain medication will be refilled on an as needed basis. **Please call for refill when you have 5-10 pills left.**
- Taking an anti-inflammatory medication (NSAID) is recommended as long as you have no medical contraindication to do so. These include ibuprofen, motrin, advil, naproxen, aleve. Please take as directed if prescribed or follow dosing instructions on the bottle if you are taking an over-the-counter medication.
- Zofran (ondansetron)- take 1 tablet every 6 hours as needed. This medication can help resolve some nausea and/or vomiting associated with anesthesia and other medications you are taking.
- These pain medications may be taken in any combination according to how much pain you are having.
- The use of narcotic pain medications can cause constipation. We suggest you use an over-the-counter stool softener while taking these medications (Colace, sennakot).

Wound Care:

- Keep your wounds dry for 2 days after surgery
- You may remove all the gauze and tape on the second day after surgery. Leave the Steri-strips on your wounds- these will fall off with time. You do not need to reapply a dressing over your wounds as the Steri-strips suffice but if the incisional area is being affected or rubbed by the brace, a light compression sleeve underneath the brace can help or redressing the wound with gauze and tape
- After you have removed the dressings, you may shower over your wounds. Do not scrub the wounds, simply let the water run over them and pat dry
- You may get some bloody drainage from your wounds the evening of your surgery. This is nothing to be concerned about. If this happens, please reinforce your dressing as needed

Follow-up appointments:

- Please make sure that you have a post-operative appointment set up for 10-14 days and in 6-8 weeks after your surgery with Dr. Hamilton. Please call 520-784-6211 to schedule if this was not arranged at the time you booked surgery or if you have any need to change a date/time of the appointment.
- Make sure you have an appointment with a physical therapist. If you do not, please call 520-784-6211 and get in as soon as possible.

Please call the office between 8:00 am – 5:00 pm at 520-784-6211, or the After Hours Clinic at 520-784-6441, if you experience any of the following:

- Fever over 101 degrees for more than 24 hours
- Foul drainage, redness or warmth at the operative site
- Large amounts of bleeding or drainage
- Severe or uncontrolled pain
- Persistent nausea or vomiting
- Hives, rash or medication intolerance

*** Call 911 or go to the nearest Emergency Room if you experience shortness of breath, redness, warmth and extreme pain in the calf. These are signs of a blood clot. ***

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