

# **Carpo-Metacarpal Fracture/Dislocation Reduction and Pinning**

## **Patient Postoperative Instructions**

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### **0-2 weeks**

#### Pain medication:

- Use your prescription pain medication as needed to control pain.
- If your arm was numbed (blocked) for the surgery by the anesthesiologist, begin taking pain medication before the block wears off.
- Do not drive or operate machinery while taking narcotic/opioid pain medication.
- Unless you cannot take them for other medical reasons, it is ok to use over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medication (e.g. Advil or Aleve) in addition to your prescription pain medication. Do not take tylenol as your prescription already contains this medication.

#### Post-op Dressings:

- Keep the dressings and splint in place until your first postoperative visit.
- Elevation of the hand, along with ice on-and-off for 20 minutes at a time, will help with swelling and pain.
- It is ok to shower, but the dressings must stay clean and dry. Place a waterproof covering over the dressings while bathing or showering (such as a heavy plastic bag that is sealed with Saran wrap).
- If the dressings get dirty, wet, or come apart please contact the office to have the dressing re-done.

#### Motion:

- Start moving your fingers and part of the thumb that is not in the splint as soon as possible.
- Work on moving your palm up (supination) and palm down (pronation), along with flexing and extending your elbow.
- You can use your hand for light activity, such as eating, drinking, or using a computer.
- Do not lift, carry, push, or pull anything heavier than a glass of water or can of soda.

### **2-6 weeks (First post-op visit)**

#### Splint:

- The postoperative splint and sutures will be removed at your 2-week visit.
- You will be placed in to a cast.
- Keep the cast clean and dry.

#### Motion:

- Therapy will be started at 6 weeks for active and passive range of motion exercises to the fingers and wrist. In some cases it may be started sooner while the cast is in place to help recover finger range of motion.
- Continue to avoid lifting, carrying, pushing, or pulling anything heavier than a glass of water.

## **6 -10 weeks (Second post-op visit)**

### Splint:

- Transition from the cast to a removable brace, which is worn until 8 weeks.
- You can begin gentle scar massage at this time.

### Motion:

- Continue finger and wrist range of motion.
- Begin finger strengthening using putty.
- You can lift/carry up to 5lbs (about 1/2 gallon of milk) as your symptoms allow at 8 weeks.
- You can lift/carry up to 10-15 lbs starting at 10 weeks.

## **10-12 weeks (Third post-op visit)**

### Splint:

- Discontinue use of the splint altogether if you have not already done so.

### Motion:

- Continue finger and wrist stretching.
- Continue grip strengthening.
- You can lift/carry up to 15 lbs.
- Transition to a home exercise program.

## **12+ weeks (Third post-op visit)**

No further therapy beyond normal use of the hand should be required at this point. There are no lifting/carrying or other activity restrictions after 12 weeks, unless otherwise discussed on a case-by-case basis.