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POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS: ELBOW FRACTURE

1. **Before surgery, please call Dr. Rudzki's MA to schedule your first postop appointment for 7-10 days post-op.** Please keep your splint clean, dry, and intact until your 1st post-operative (post-op) visit. At the 1st post-op appointment, we will remove your splint/dressings, remove your sutures, and discuss the plan for your therapy and recovery. If you have staples, they will be removed at your 2nd postop, and we will determine the timeframe for the 2nd post-op appointment your 1st post-op appointment.
2. If you develop a fever (temperature greater than 101.5 F), redness or drainage from the surgical incision site, please call our office to arrange for an evaluation.
3. You will receive two prescriptions for pain medication (typically morphine sulfate & Oxycodone).
 - These pain medications are all opioid narcotic derivatives, which have potential side effects that include constipation, nausea and sleepiness. Please take over the counter laxatives and stool softeners (ex. Peri-Colace, MiraLax, etc.), drink a lot of water, and eat dried apricots/ prunes 3x/day. These medications should not be taken on an empty stomach.
 - Please **do not take any Motrin, Ibuprofen, or Aleve (NSAIDs)** as these may impair your reconstructed ligament from healing.
4. You may slowly resume a regular diet as tolerated. We recommend you start slowly with clear liquids, diluted Gatorade, chicken/beef broth & crackers:
 - As soon as you get home, take small bites of food (1/4 turkey sandwich, diluted Gatorade, chicken soup, crackers) and 30 minutes later take your first pain pill (Oxycodone). Repeat this process 45-60 minutes later and take a 2nd pain pill (Oxycodone). Repeat again 45-60 minutes later and take a morphine sulfate. From this point forward, take Oxycodone 1-2 tabs every 4-6 hrs and morphine sulfate 1 tab every 12 hours. **It's important to stay ahead of pain, but do not take the pain pills if you are sedated. If you are 21 years or older, take 1 baby aspirin twice a day for DVT prophylaxis.**
5. Elevation and protection of your surgical site are the most important considerations for initial post-op care. Elevate your operative extremity as much as possible by keeping your elbow above your heart and your wrist and fingers above your elbow.
 - Please do not use the operative extremity for any lifting, pulling, or pushing activities.
6. You may try to ice your elbow for 30 minutes at a time, 2-3 times each day but this typically is less helpful after surgery because the splint limits the ability for the ice to make the surgery site cold. It is very important however, that you not let your splint get damp or wet in the process.
7. **Do not get your incision wet or shower until cleared to do so by Dr. Rudzki.** Please do not bathe/soak the surgical area or go swimming in the pool/hot tub/ocean.
8. Your sling should be worn for the first 2 weeks when you are out of the home to provide both comfort and support. Otherwise, we prefer that you come out of the sling as often as possible to assist you in elevating the extremity.
 - It will be helpful to sleep with pillows supporting your elbow and forearm.

Rudzki's MA can be reached at 202-787-5601 ext 652 or RudzkiMA@alignedortho.com

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