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Postoperative Instructions: Elbow Arthroscopy

When You Get Home:

Rest for the remainder of the day.

Be Safe- stay in the care of responsible adult the first 24 hours.

Use Ice as much as possible:

20 minutes on/20 minutes off for regular ice packs/frozen peas

If you are using a cold therapy machine, use it according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Pain Medication:

Take your pain medication- it's better to stay ahead of the pain.

Oral Narcotic pain medicines (Vicodin, Norco, Percocet, Ultram, Codeine) help with pain, but can cause:

Drowsiness: Be Safe, don't drive, operate machinery, don't mix it with alcohol.

Stomach upset: Take with food, or try over the counter Zantac or Tums.

Constipation:

Drink enough fluids, use fiber supplements (Metamucil, Senokot)

Take Prune juice or Milk of Magnesia if still constipated after 2 days

You may take anti-inflammatory medication to help with pain and swelling.

Some patients are prescribed Toradol (Ketorolac): take every 6 hours for 4 days.

Ok to take with Pain Medications, not with other anti-inflammatories

After 4 days of Toradol, you can take other anti-inflammatory medicines like:

Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), Naproxen (Aleve), Lodine, Mobic, Celebrex

Go easy on the anti-inflammatory medications if you have stomach problems.

Dressing and Wound Care:

You may change your surgical bandages two days after surgery.

You can unwrap the cotton dressing, and remove the gauze dressings underneath.

You can place a new clean gauze or some bandaids over the incisions.

We'll remove the stitches one week after surgery.

Exercises: Begin exercises right after surgery.

Immediately start range of motion exercises on your own to get the elbow moving.

It's best to use your muscles to make it move, with a little help from your other arm.

Move your elbow around many times during the day

Plan to start physical therapy soon after surgery to get the elbow moving.

Also exercise your shoulder and wrist and fingers.

Activities and Restrictions:

You will be in a sling for comfort only- you may remove it without any problems.

You'll be getting around your house well within a few days.

Resume light activities (walking, etc.) after a few days.

Driving: Only after you are SAFE, which means:

Off pain medications, and able to control a vehicle safely

It can be difficult to control a car with one arm in a sling or splint.

Problems or Questions? Call us at 925-600-7020

Feel free to call us if you have any concerns, or for:

Unrelenting pain, or increasing swelling or numbness or high fevers (over 101.5)

Continuous drainage or bleeding that is soaking your bandage/dressing

Chest pain, shortness of breath