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Postoperative Instructions: Elbow Hardware Removal

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: It may not fully cool the elbow below the dressing, but it is still beneficial.
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, operative 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 will have a soft bandage around the elbow.
 - You can change the bandage in 2 days (keep the steri-strips on the skin).
 - You can shower two days after surgery- you can cover the incision using a plastic bag.

Activities:

- Sling: You will be in a sling for comfort- you can remove it if you would like.
 - At your first postop visit we will remove your suture.
- 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.

Exercises:

- Begin exercises immediately:
 - Move your thumb and fingers around many times during the day
 - After a few days you can start some gentle elbow exercises.

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

- Feel free to call us if you have any concerns, or if you have any:
 - Unrelenting pain, or increasing swelling or numbness, or high fever (above 101.5)
 - Continuous drainage or bleeding that is soaking your dressing/bandage.
 - Chest pain, shortness of breath