

Postoperative Instructions: Elbow Olecranon Bursectomy

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), Lidocaine, 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.

It is good to keep even compression over the incision with the cotton wrap, to keep the fluid from returning.

Don't put the wrap so tight that the hand swells or goes numb.

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