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## Postoperative Instructions: Elbow Distal Biceps Repair

### 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 splint, 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 be in a sling and brace for three weeks.
- Keep the postoperative splint clean and dry.
  - You may take a shower, but use a heavy plastic bag and tape around the arm to keep it dry.
  - You may want to use a shower chair or plastic patio chair to sit on in the shower.

### Activities:

- Sling: You will be in a sling and brace for the first three weeks after surgery.
  - 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 and brace.

### Exercises:

- Begin exercises immediately:
  - Move your wrist and thumb and fingers around many times during the day
  - Physical therapy will give you gentle exercises starting three weeks after surgery.

### 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 dressing
  - Chest pain, shortness of breath