



TUAN A. TRAN M.D., M.B.A, F.A.C.S.

Diplomate American Board of Plastic Surgery, Diplomate American Board of Surgery

General Surgery, Reconstructive Surgery, Aesthetic Surgery, Plastic and Hand Surgery

Ulnar Nerve Transposition Surgery

Post-Operative Instructions

Diet

- You may consume clear liquids and light foods after surgery (Jell-O, soup, etc.)
- Progress back to your normal diet as tolerated as long as you are not nauseated.

Medications

- Before surgery you will be offered a nerve block which helps greatly with pain control and decreases your need to take narcotic medications. It is important to begin taking your pain medications before this medicine wears off.
- The first pain medication to use is Percocet which is a strong narcotic pain medication. It will begin to work within 15 minutes after ingesting with full effect in one to two hours.
- Normally, Percocet is taken every 4-6 hours as needed for severe pain.
- Common side effects of the medication are nausea, constipation, itching, and drowsiness.
- To prevent nausea you may take the medicine with a little food, start with just one pill, and be patient while the medicine begins to work. Usually, after the first few doses the nausea will go away. Your doctor may also prescribe an anti-nausea medication called Zofran (Ondansetron) to be taken if you have persistent nausea after surgery.
- It is recommended that you take an OTC stool softener such as Colace 100 mg 1 tablet a day and/or a laxative such as Senokot DS 1 tablet a day to avoid constipation.
- Take Benadryl one half hour before your narcotic if you experience itching.
- Transition from Percocet to Tylenol as your pain subsides, but pay attention to the dosage as Percocet has 325 mg of Tylenol in each pill. Patients with normal liver function should not consume more than 4,000 mg of Tylenol per day.
- You may take Aleve or Advil in addition to the Percocet to help with pain relief. These medications work synergistically to improve your pain control.

Bandages & Sling

- Your post-operative splint should be kept clean and dry for the first 48 hours after surgery.
- You can remove your dressing 2 days after surgery to shower. Leave the steri-strips in place. Replace your ACE wrap after showering.
- You will have a sling placed after surgery.

Ice & Activity

- Elevate your elbow above the level of your heart to minimize swelling. Avoid having your hand hanging down for extended periods of time.



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- Application of ice is especially important during the first 48 hours following surgery. The ice pack should be large (like a gallon zip-lock bag) and held firmly on the surgery area. Apply for 15 minutes every hour while awake if possible.
- You are encouraged to move your wrist and fingers as much as possible as this will improve your chances of an early recovery and decrease your chances of developing stiffness.
- You may return to sedentary work or school in 3-4 days after surgery if your pain is tolerable. If your work involves heavy lifting, you would need a clearance from your surgeon to return to work.

Sleeping

Many patients have difficulty sleeping after elbow surgery. You may find that sleeping in a slightly upright position (i.e. reclining chair) with a pillow under your forearm will be your most comfortable position. Make sure to have your pain under control before you sleep.

Hand Therapy

- Hand therapy will help assess how your body responded to the surgical procedure. Your therapist will start a range of motion and exercises on your first visit to help you feel more comfortable starting light activities.
- You may start hand therapy after your first post-operative visit.

Follow-up Appointment

- Your follow-up appointment will be scheduled by our staff at your pre-operative appointment. Typically your first post-operative appointment is between 5 to 10 days after surgery.

Possible Problems/Emergency

If you develop any symptoms such as fevers with temperature greater than 101.5 F, chills, persistent nausea and vomiting, inability to urinate, severe pain not controlled with medications, pus drainage from the wound site, or for any acute problems or illnesses, please contact our office at 714-839-8000 between the hours of 9AM-6PM Monday-Thursday and 9AM-1PM on Friday; or you may reach us at 714-860-3588 after hours. If you are unable to reach your surgeon or a member of his staff, go to the Emergency Room closest to you.

References:

Tidewater Orthopaedics. (2020). *Post operative instructions after ulnar nerve transposition surgery: Helpful hints & important precautions for patients.* Retrieved from <https://www.tidewaterortho.com/sites/tidewaterortho.com/files/Ulnar%20Nerve%20Transposition%20Surgery.pdf>