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

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

Dupuytren's Contracture Release

Post-Op Instructions

After Surgery

Dupuytren's contracture release surgery removes the "altered" palmar fascia that causes the finger(s) to stay in a bent position and allows them to extend. After the surgery, you will have a soft dressing that covers the wound on your palm and operative finger(s). Within the first 24 hours after surgery, you may experience some numbness due to the local anesthetic injected. After 24 hours, it is not uncommon to still experience some numbness and tingling due to the delicate nerves of the finger.

Recovery

- You may not experience significant swelling following this procedure, but it would be helpful to keep your hand/wrist elevated as best as you can for the first 24 hours after surgery.
- You can also apply an ice pack or a bag of frozen vegetables to the palm side of the dressing to help minimize swelling.
- To optimize recovery, keep your non-operated fingers moving. You may attempt to make a fist with your fingers then completely straighten them. Make sure you can move your thumb across your hand towards your pinky finger and fully straighten it. Repeat these motions and efforts throughout the day, especially in the first few days following surgery to prevent internal scarring from becoming an issue. Your dressing and discomfort will limit you, but I ask that you do the best you can.
- Keep your pain under control also allow you to move your fingers more easily. Take the prescription pain medicine as prescribed for the first day and then as needed.

Please note that each patient heals at a different rate. You will notice that it will be difficult to flex or bend your finger right after the surgery. These are common initial responses and you should see significant improvement with time and therapy.

Care for the Dressing/Wound

- Keep the dressing, and all the skin covered, clean and dry.
- Once the surgical dressing is removed, keep the wound and your skin clean. You may use soap and water to clean your skin. It is OK to get everything wet in a shower with running water. Avoid immersing your wound under water until the sutures are removed.
- Please do not use salves like Neosporin™ or Bacitracin™ on the wound. Soap and water or peroxide is a safe and effective choice. Make sure to keep your wound covered with a non-adherent bandage at all times.



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Activity Level

You can do anything that does not hurt with some exception.

- Avoid or limit repetitive activities like typing for about a week to 2-3 weeks to avoid swelling that will prolong discomfort and limit finger flexibility.
- Limit lifting with the operative hand for a few days or until it becomes more comfortable.
- Everyone's pain threshold is different, but a reasonable guideline is to limit yourself to about 1-2 pounds with the operative hand.

Therapy

Your optimal recovery will depend upon a formal, supervised therapy program. I will refer you to a qualified therapist near you. You will likely to continue therapy for approximately 2-3 months.

Follow-up Care

Your first visit will be within 2-3 days of the operation. This is to remove drains from your wound designed to limit internal bleeding within the finger and palm that could lead to significant scarring. That visit will be arranged during your pre-operative appointment.

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, new or different colored drainage from your surgical incision, 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:

Hand Center. (2020). Post-operative instructions: Dupuytren's contracture release. Retrieved from https://www.handcenterga.com/sites/handcenterga.com/files/post_op_dups.pdf