POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Ganglion Cyst Removal

Post Operative

Dressing
- Keep dressing clean and DRY.
- Do NOT remove dressing until follow up appointment.
- You will have a splint on your wrist after surgery to help protect your wrist until your follow up appointment.

Showering
- You must keep your dressing clean and dry until seen in office.
- This means that you will have to sponge bathe until your follow up appointment.

Driving
- You may ride in a car immediately after surgery. If you are going to be in the car for long periods of time, we recommend getting out of the car at least 1 time an hour to walk around.
- You may drive the day after surgery, once the anesthesia has worn off.
- We recommend practicing in a parking lot to ensure you are able to control the vehicle.
- You are NOT allowed to drive while taking any pain medicine.

Activity
- Gentle active use of the hand is allowed after surgery.
- We ask that you take it easy for about 4 weeks after this surgery so that you do not create extra swelling which may cause the cyst to reoccur.
- There are no special precautions after this surgery.

Physical Therapy
- Immediately after surgery, there are no specific exercises for you to work on as you will be in a splint.

Icing and Elevating
- We recommend icing and elevating as much as possible after surgery to help with pain and swelling. We recommend placing a layer between the ice and your skin, and icing for 20 minutes at a time, several times throughout the day. You should wait at least 20 minutes in between icing sessions and should NOT sleep with the ice bag on.

Medications
- Take your pain medication as directed. Pain medication can make you constipated, so make sure you are consuming plenty of water and fiber. If necessary, you can also try an over the counter stool softener. You may also take your pain medication with food to help prevent nausea.
- Take your antibiotic as directed. It is important to complete the entire prescription.
- Resume home medications as directed prior to surgery.

7-10 days Follow Up Appointment
During your first postoperative appointment it is likely that you will be seen by our Physician Assistant. The intent of this visit is to simply check your incision and go over some basic instructions. The physician will be available if there are any questions or concerns.

**Dressing**
- During this appointment your dressing and stitches will be removed and steri strips will be applied to your skin. You may take the steri strips off after 1 week. Do not worry if they fall off sooner.
- You may also be placed in an ace wrap with a gauze pad for a few days to protect your incision. You may remove this daily to shower, and reapply it until you feel comfortable to go without anything over your incision. Typically this is for 2 or 3 days.

**Showering**
- You may now shower, even with the steri strips on.
- Gently wash the incision with soap and water. Do NOT scrub. Once you are out of the shower, pat the area dry and apply new dressing as directed above.
- Do NOT submerge your incision (pools, baths or hot tubs) for at least 3 weeks after surgery. You should not submerge your incision until it is completely healed.
- Do NOT use any powders or creams on your incision.

**Splint**
- You will placed in a wrist brace at this appointment. You should remain in this brace full time including at night until you are 4 weeks out from surgery.
- You may come out of the brace while bathing, sitting quietly resting, and to perform your home exercises outlined below.

**Activity**
- You may start to gradually progress your activity level letting pain be your guide. It is usually about 1-2 weeks before patients are comfortable using the hand for low demand activities such as desk work or working around the house (cooking, dishes, ironing, etc.). It is typically about 3-4 weeks before patients are able to comfortably return to manual labor or heavy weight lifting.
- You may now participate in cardiovascular activities as tolerated. This includes biking and running you may return to using the elliptical as long as you do not use your operative arm.

**Physical Therapy**
- You may now start working on some gentle ROM exercises. This includes:

1. **Wrist Flexion Stretch**
   - Hold your operative arm out straight in front of you with your palm facing down.
   - Bend at the wrist so that your fingers are reaching toward your toes.
   - Gently grasp your operative fingers with the other hand and pull them back towards your body creating a gentle stretch.
   - Hold the stretch for 10 seconds.
   - Do this for 5 repetitions and repeat 3 times a day.

2. **Wrist Extension Stretch**
   - Hold your operative arm out straight in front of you with your palm facing down.
   - Extend at the wrist so that your fingers are reaching toward your face.
   - Gently grasp your operative fingers with the other hand and pull them back towards your body creating a gentle stretch.
   - Hold the stretch for 10 seconds.
   - Do this for 5 repetitions and repeat 3 times a day.
3. Wrist Supination Stretch
-Hold your operative arm against your side with your elbow bent to 90 degrees and your palm facing down.
-Rotate at the wrist so that your palm faces up, making sure to keep your upper arm against your side.
-Gently grasp your operative fingers with the other hand and continue to rotate your wrist creating a gentle stretch.
-Hold the stretch for 10 seconds.
-Do this for 5 repetitions and repeat 3 times a day.

4. Wrist Pronation Stretch
-Hold your operative arm against your side with your elbow bent 90 degrees and your palm facing up.
-Rotate at the wrist so that your palm faces down, making sure to keep your upper arm against your side.
-Gently grasp your operative fingers with the other hand and continue to rotate your wrist creating a gentle stretch.
-Hold the stretch for 10 seconds.
-Do this for 5 repetitions and repeat 3 times a day.

-Formal physical therapy generally is not necessary after this procedure. However, if necessary or desired, we are happy to write you for therapy during this appointment.

4 Week Follow Up Appointment
-Depending on how you are doing, we may ask to see you again for a follow up once you are 4 weeks out from surgery. If you are doing well with no pain or problems, you may call and cancel this appointment.

Dressing
-Once your incision is completely healed, you may start gentle scar massage with Vitamin E lotion to gently break up any scar tissue and help moisturize the skin.

Splint
-You may now discontinue wearing your brace.

Activity
-Continue to gradually increase your activity level letting pain be your guide.

Physical Therapy
-Continue to work on your ROM exercises.
-You may now start working on some gentle strengthening exercises. This includes:

1. Wrist Flexion Strengthening
-Rest your operative arm on a table straight in front of you so that your forearm is supported and your wrist is hanging off the edge of the table with your palm facing up.
-Using a 1-2 pound weight (the equivalent of a small soup can) gently flex your wrist to 90 degrees and hold for 3 seconds.
-Relax slowly back down to neutral position or just beyond neutral in a slightly extended position.
-Do this for 5 repetitions and repeat 3 times a day.
2. Wrist Extension Strengthening
- Rest your operative arm on a table straight in front of you so that your forearm is supported and your wrist is hanging off the edge of the table with your palm facing down.
- Using a 1-2 pound weight (the equivalent of a small soup can) gently extend your wrist to 90 degrees and hold for 3 seconds.
- Relax slowly back down to neutral position or just beyond neutral in a slightly flexed position.
- Do this for 5 repetitions and repeat 3 times a day.

3. Grip Strength
- Gently squeeze a stress ball for a count of 3 seconds then relax your grip.
- Do this for 10 repetitions and repeat 3 times a day.