

Discharge Instructions- General

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The US is facing a crisis with opioids to the point that a National Emergency has been declared and new Florida law implemented, so we would like to provide you with some additional information regarding your medications. Opioid medications like Vicodin, Percocet, Oxycodone, Norco, and Oxycontin were created to treat intense pain by blocking receptors in your brain. They can be addictive for some patients even with only short-term use. Florida State law now limits prescriptions of these medications to 3 days. Medications like Tylenol (Acetaminophen), Advil (Ibuprofen), and Aleve (Naproxen) can be very effective in treating post-surgical pain, they work by helping the body reduce inflammation in the area where surgery was performed. These medications were created to treat moderate pain without impairing or addictive effects. You will likely still feel some pain after surgery, but this means that your body is healing. We have outlined your instructions to help improve and control your postoperative pain to tolerable levels.

We will still be providing you with a 3-day supply of opioids, but these are meant to be taken for intolerable pain only. For pain control outside of your prescription, we recommend taking extra strength Tylenol (500mg) every six hours and alternate with Ibuprofen (600mg) every six hours. These can be taken safely together unless you have a contraindication or have been instructed not to take them by your physician. You may have been provided with a prescription for Toradol (anti-inflammatory) for the first 2-3 days. After this, you can take Ibuprofen or another anti-inflammatory of your choice scheduled for the first week postoperatively to maximize pain control and decrease inflammation. The prescribed opioids like Oxycodone should be taken for breakthrough pain only.

Medications:

- Take the pain medication Dr. Sabesan has prescribed for you. You should also start taking an anti-inflammatory like Aleve; 1-2 tablets every 12 hours or Ibuprofen, 600mg every 6 hours. This will help with your pain control, healing and inflammation.
- When taking a narcotic (Percocet, Norco, and Vicodin) we recommend you take a stool softener (Colace, Senokot) to help prevent constipation. This can be purchased over the counter. You should also drink at least 6-8 glasses of water and make sure your diet contains fruit, vegetables, and fiber.
- A prescription for Zofran 4mg should be requested if you are experiencing nausea and vomiting after surgery. Your pain medical can also make you nauseated so take it with food.
- Ice machines and bags of ice can be used to ice your surgical site as needed. This may be done 4-5 times a day for 20 minutes at a time.

Wound Care:

- Keep incision clean and dry.
- You can remove your dressing in two (2) days. Remove the old bandage and you will see old blood and butterfly (steri-strips). Leave the strips in place initially and they should come off on their own over the next 2 weeks. You can remove the steri-strips after 2 weeks. You can place another gauze pad over the incision after you shower if there is drainage or if you would like to keep it covered.
- You may shower, but no tub bathes or soaking (swimming, hot tubs) until staples are removed. When showing let the water and soap run over your incision, do not scrub your incision directly.

- DO NOT PUT any alcohol, lotions, or any other medications on your sutures. Cover the area with a clean dressing (4X4) from the drug store if needed.

Slings/Braces/Splints:

- If you have a cast or splint-** Please wear your splint or brace at all times until your follow-up appointment with Dr. Sabesan.
- Do not get cast/splint wet.
- Do not put weight on your operative side before your follow-up appointment.

Home Exercises 4-5 times a day:

- Do gentle range of motion exercises of your hand and fingers. Open and close your fist about 15 times multiple times a day.
- Please continue PT exercises as instructed by the therapist if you've seen one.
- You should try to get out of bed at least three times a day.
- All Patients should:** Take your arm out of your sling to move your elbow and wrist, but not your shoulder. Move your elbow up and down, move your wrist in a circular motion and make a fist 10-15 times each hour to help reduce swelling and prevent stiffness in your hand and elbow.

Follow-up Appointment: You will have a follow-up appointment approximately two weeks after your surgery. During this visit your sutures will be removed, and any questions you have regarding the actual surgery performed or your postoperative care will be answered.

Driving: Legally we cannot recommend that you drive while wearing a sling, brace or splint. It is considered driving while impaired, and can be a legal issue if you are involved in an accident since you do not have full function of your limb. You should also not drive while taking any narcotic medicine (Vicodin, Percocet, Norco, etc.).

When to call the Doctor:

- If you have a fever above 101.5
- Excessive Bleeding (example: you have to change the dressing numerous times)
- Foul odor or drainage from your incision, excessive redness, excruciating pain.
- Excessive pain not relieved by medication or rest
- Call Dr. Sabesan's office at (561) 967-4400. On evenings, nights, and weekends the answering service will contact the provider on call or if you are concerned you may also go to your local emergency room.