

Dr. Allen Ulnar Nerve Decompression Post-Op Instructions

Dressings

If you had a nerve transposition, a splint was placed post-op, keep this in place until your first post-op visit at 1 or 2 weeks. Use a bag over your arm or take sponge baths during this time. If you did not have a nerve transposition, then a simple, bulky soft dressing was placed. This should remain on for 5 days post-op and can be removed thereafter and covered with a simple bandage. Make sure to wash your hands before touching the skin around your incision. Dressings can be removed and replaced with clean, fresh gauze, make sure to keep the wound covered until your first follow up. It is ok to shower after your first dressing change. Allow clean water to wash over the wound, do not scrub or wash it with any soaps. Your wound was likely closed with sutures that will need to be removed. Do not pick at or remove any scabs or loose glue ends, they will fall off on their own. It is ok to lotion the skin surrounding the incision, but don't place any lotion or ointment directly on the wound. Once you've showered and replaced the dressings, replace your brace. Avoid any excessive motion of your elbow during this time.

Pain Control

Pain control is a very important aspect of your recovery. It is well documented that multimodal pain control is the most effective way to manage post-operative pain. At the end of the procedure, I may inject local anesthetic into the surgical field. Typically, only a few or no narcotics are required after nerve decompression surgery. If a narcotic prescription was provided for you, this is to be used for break through pain. Combining the narcotic pain medications with Tylenol and Ibuprofen has been shown to give superior pain relief compared to the narcotic alone. The goal is to use the narcotic pain medications sparingly and discontinue its use within a few days. Ice and elevation for the first several days after your surgery will also help control your pain.

Nausea

Nausea after surgery and anesthesia is not uncommon. You will receive an anti-nausea medication prescription for use at your discretion.

Sling

A sling may will be provided to help support the arm and the weight of the splint. This is for your comfort. You can discontinue its use at your discretion

Movement/Exercise

Make sure to come out of the sling several times a day to move the shoulder. Move your fingers and thumb several times a day to prevent stiffness.

Follow Up

Typically, your first follow up is about 2 weeks after surgery. We will assess your wound and remove any sutures at this time. We will remove your splint if applicable and arrange any therapy if needed.