

Post-operative Instructions: Hand joint replacements

Dressing:

Please keep your dressing clean and dry until you see Dr. Kitay back in the office. It should be covered and kept out of the water for bathing. Elevate your hand to minimize swelling. You may also put an ice pack over your operative site to help reduce pain and swelling.

Activity:

Please feel free to move the parts of your fingers that were left out of your dressing, but please **do not lift anything heavier than your dinner fork with your operative hand**. You may use your hand for light activity (typing, eating) as pain allows, but **rest and elevation are encouraged**.

Pain control:

You may be given a prescription for narcotic pain medication. Please use the narcotic medication as sparingly as possible to avoid trouble with side effects (nausea, constipation, dizziness, addiction). It is okay to take Advil, Motrin, Ibuprofen, or Aleve in addition to the narcotic pain medication if your medical history allows NSAIDs (but best to take those medications with food to avoid GI upset). Please do not mix Tylenol/Acetaminophen with your narcotic medication, as the narcotics often come with Tylenol/Acetaminophen mixed in. As your pain decreases, please wean yourself off of the narcotics as soon as possible by substituting over the counter medications instead (ie- Advil, Motrin, Tylenol, or Aleve). For constipation, you can take 300 mg of colace a day (colace is an over the counter stool softener).

Follow up:

Please make an appointment for ~5-7 days after surgery.

Return to work/school:

You may return to light activity at work/school once you no longer need narcotic pain medication, but no lifting on the operative extremity is allowed.

For questions, please call the office: 301-657-9876