

## **Post-operative Instructions : Elbow Fracture Fixation**

### **Dressing:**

Please keep your dressing clean, dry, and intact until you follow up. You may put an ice pack over your operative site to help reduce pain and swelling.

### **Activity:**

No lifting or weight bearing on your operative extremity. Please continue using your sling until you follow up. Your elbow will be immobilized in a splint, but you should work on range of motion of your wrist and hand. Please open and close your fingers several times a day to avoid finger stiffness. You may use the hand for light activity such as typing, but do not lift anything heavier than your dinner fork with your operative hand.

### **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). If you are able to take NSAIDs based on your medical history, it is okay to take Advil, Motrin, Ibuprofen, or Aleve in addition to the narcotic pain medication (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 ~7-10 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