

What to Expect After Trigger Finger Surgery

The goal of trigger finger surgery is to release the tight pulley on the palm side of your hand that is preventing your flexor tendon from gliding smoothly. The catching/triggering usually improves immediately after surgery. It is normal to have some post-surgical soreness in the finger for about 6 weeks after surgery, but most patients report marked improvements in pain by 2 weeks after surgery.

Patients with long-standing trigger finger can get stiffness at the finger joints from avoiding full motion to prevent the finger from getting stuck. While the catching and pain typically improve quickly after surgery, the stiffness from long-standing trigger finger may not improve fully.

Activity:

The more you rest in the first few days after surgery, the less bleeding, swelling, and scar tissue you will form and the better you will do. You will be able to perform light activity with your hand after surgery **that does not cause pain**, including typing, writing, and eating with your hand. You should avoid activity that causes pain, and no heavy lifting is allowed until your wound is fully healed (usually about 2 weeks after surgery).

Logistics:

Some patients have this surgery under local anesthesia without any sedation. These patients do not need preoperative blood work and can eat and drink before surgery. They do not need someone to take them home after the surgery. If you prefer to have sedation for the surgery, you will need to fast prior to surgery (nothing to eat or drink after midnight the night before surgery). Someone will need to be present to take you home after surgery. You may also require preoperative blood work and medical clearance to ensure it is safe for you to undergo anesthesia.

Pain control:

Most patients only have mild pain after this surgery that is well controlled by over the counter medications (ie- Advil, Motrin, Tylenol, or Aleve). You may also be given a small prescription for narcotic pain medication in case you need something stronger for the first few days after surgery.

Bathing:

You will go home with a soft bandage on your hand that should stay clean and dry for 3 days after surgery. On the 4th day after surgery, please take the soft bandage off. At this point, your wound can get wet while washing your hands and showering. You should then pat the wound dry and cover the sutures with a band aid. Please do not soak your wound (no bath tubs, no pools, no hot tubs, no doing dishes). Please do not scrub your wound, and please do not put any lotions or ointments on the wound.

Follow up: You will follow up with Dr. Kitay about 2 weeks after surgery. During that appointment, we will remove your sutures and check your range of motion. Most patients do not require formal therapy after surgery.