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Distal Biceps Repair Postoperative Instructions

General

A family member or caregiver may need to assist you for the next few weeks.

- Helps with basic movement and function
- Helps with household chores
- Helps ensure all medications are administered
- Helps provide emotional support for daily life and rehabilitation

Furniture may need to be rearranged to avoid tripping and falling.

In general, the more you are up and ambulating, the better you will do.

You may ice once every hour for up to 20 minutes, as needed, in the first few postoperative days.

If you had a nerve block, the effects may last 24 hours.

Activity

Non-weight bearing to the operative arm. You are in a sling until the first follow up appointment.

Do:

- Wear the sling for comfort. It is a good idea to wear it at night and when out-and-about to protect the arm.
- Perform active wrist and finger motion exercises several times per day.
- Follow your physical therapist's instructions.
- You may return to work with no use of the operative arm

Do Not:

- Lift anything with the operative arm
- Remove the dressing

Wound Care

Unless otherwise noted, your surgical site was closed with all-absorbable sutures under the skin, with glue over top to seal the incision.

- Do not remove the dressing. It will remain on until the follow up appointment.

Some drainage is normal for the first few days postoperatively.

- Excessive drainage that does not slow down or saturates the area after a few days is worrisome. Please call the office with any questions or concerns.

Some redness around the incision is also normal in the first week postoperatively.

- If the wound becomes progressively more red, swollen, or painful after several days, please call the office.

Medications

Unless otherwise noted, you will be given prescriptions for the following medications:

Aspirin 81 mg daily (4 weeks total)

- Helps prevent blood clots postoperatively

Acetaminophen (Tylenol) 1000 mg every 6 hours



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- This high dose, combined with gabapentin and celecoxib, works very well for pain without the need for opioids.
- Do not exceed 4000 mg in a single day

Gabapentin (Neurontin) 100 mg three times daily

- Works along with acetaminophen and celecoxib
- May make you drowsy
- Easiest to take with breakfast, lunch, dinner

Oxycodone (Roxicodone) 5 mg every 6 hours as needed

- Strong pain medication that can cause addiction
- Indiana law only allows prescription of 1 weeks' worth of narcotics
- Only use this as a last resort
- May cause nausea, constipation, drowsiness, altered mentation
- The goal is to completely avoid taking this medication

Docusate (Colace) 100 mg twice daily

- This helps prevent constipation associated with oxycodone

Ondansetron (Zofran) 4 mg dissolved on tongue every 6 hours as needed for nausea

- For postoperative nausea

Indomethacin (Indocin) 75 mg orally daily (6 weeks total)

- This is a potent anti-inflammatory that aids in reduction of heterotopic ossification after this type of surgery. Take it with food, as it can upset your stomach.

Showering

You may shower on postoperative day 3

- Leave the dressing in place. Let water run over but do not aggressively scrub. Pat dry afterwards.

Do NOT soak or submerge under water (bath tub, hot tub, pool).

- Until wound is completely healed (usually around 6 weeks)

Driving

You may return to driving if:

- You are completely off narcotic pain medications
- Strength and reflexes are back to normal
- Typically no earlier than 2 weeks postoperatively

Follow-up

Dr. Baessler will see you back in the office 2 weeks postoperatively for a wound check.