

Elite Plastic Surgery

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Hand & Wrist

Post Operative Instructions

Instructions

Elevation: elevation is very important after hand/wrist surgery. The hand/wrist should be elevated above the level of the heart for one to four days following surgery – depending on the procedure that was done. A sling does not allow sufficient elevation in the first few days. When standing, you should hold your hand at or above your shoulder level. When sitting, rest your elbow on a padded surface with your hand pointing straight up. When in bed or on a couch, put a pillow beneath your upper arm, and another on your abdominal area and rest your arm on the pillows.

Exercises: unless your fingers are immobilized, you should begin finger and thumb range of motion exercises immediately. Straighten your fingers as much as possible and then flex them to “make a fist.”

Pain: pain and swelling will be decreased by maintaining elevation. Again, this is very important. Take the pain medication as directed, as necessary.

Dressing: unless otherwise instructed, keep your dressing on and keep it dry. Cover your hand with a plastic bag or commercially available ‘cast cover’ when showering. Remember; keep your hand elevated to avoid water running down into the dressing.