

After Your Elbow Fracture Surgery

Dr. Paul Nielsen

Dressings and Wound Care

- After surgery you will have a bulky splint on your elbow to hold it in a good position
 - Use the sling as much as it is comfortable with the weight of the splint
- Leave the splint in place until follow up
 - You must cover the splint for showering to keep it dry
- Call our office at 308-865-2570 if something happens to your splint

Pain Medicine

- NSAIDs such as ibuprofen or naproxen are recommended to improve pain after surgery in addition to prescription pain medication
- You will be prescribed a strong pain medication, such as hydrocodone and oxycodone, to control your pain after surgery
 - You are allowed to drive when you are not taking prescription pain medication if you can do so safely

Activity

- You are encouraged to aggressively move your fingers and hand immediately after surgery
- Elevate your elbow above heart for the first few days after surgery
- Do not lift anything with your arm until after your first post-operative appointment

Follow-Up Care

- You will have an appointment in clinic 14-18 days after surgery to remove sutures or staples
 - Additional appointments are at 6 weeks, 10 weeks, and 18 weeks after surgery
- Most patients switch to a removable brace 2 weeks after surgery and start moving their elbow
- Formal therapy is sometimes required if stiffness develops

Results

- Soreness and stiffness often persists until 3-6 months after surgery
- Most patients regain a functional range of motion after surgery
- Hardware is sometimes removed 6-12 months later if it is prominent and sore at the tip of the elbow