

After Your Distal Radius Fracture Spanning Plate Surgery

Dr. Paul Nielsen

Dressings and Wound Care

- After surgery you will have a bulky dressing on your wrist to help with swelling
- Leave the dressing in place until follow up
 - You must cover the dressing 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 to control your pain after surgery
 - You should start taking pain medication as soon as you start getting feeling back, indicating the nerve block is wearing off to avoid rebound pain
 - You are allowed to drive when you are not taking prescription pain medication

Activity

- You are encouraged to aggressively move your fingers immediately after surgery
- Elevate your hand above your elbow and heart for the first few days after surgery
- You are allowed to lift up to 10 pounds with your arm immediately after surgery
 - You can also use a platform walker if needed after surgery

Follow-Up Care

- You will have an appointment in clinic 10-14 days after surgery to remove sutures
 - The next appointment will be about 6 weeks after surgery
- The plate is removed with a second surgery about 12 weeks after the initial surgery
- Formal therapy is usually not needed

Results

- Soreness and stiffness often persists until 4-6 months after surgery
- Most patients regain a functional range of motion after surgery