

After Your Distal Radius Fracture Surgery

Dr. Paul Nielsen

Dressings and Wound Care

- After surgery you will have a bulky splint on your wrist to hold it in a good position
- 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 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
- Do not lift anything with your arm until after your first post-operative appointment

Follow-Up Care

- You will have an appointment in clinic 10-14 days after surgery to remove sutures
 - Additional appointments are at 6 and 12 weeks after surgery
- Most patients switch to a removable brace 2 weeks after surgery and start moving their wrist
- Formal therapy is sometimes required if stiffness develops between 2 and 6 weeks after surgery

Results

- Soreness and stiffness often persists until 3-6 months after surgery
- Most patients regain a functional range of motion after surgery
- Hardware to fix the broken wrist usually does not have to be removed