



Wide Awake Hand Surgery – “WALANT”

Hand Surgery has traditionally been performed with the use of a tourniquet in order to provide better visualization. However a tourniquet can be quite painful for the awake patient, making anesthesia necessary.

An alternative to tourniquet hand surgery is to use two medications administered locally to accomplish surgery in a safe painless manner. Lidocaine blocks pain, and epinephrine stops bleeding. This technique is known as “WALANT” - *Wide Awake Local Anesthesia No Tourniquet*.

WALANT hand surgery is very similar to going to the dentist for a procedure. There is no need for fasting or preoperative testing.

The Advantages of WALANT Hand Surgery Are:

- No need to spend time and money to obtain preoperative testing (labwork, EKG, etc)
- Avoid costs associated with anesthesia (anesthesiologist, medications, monitoring)
- No need for IV
- Spend less time and money at surgery center
 - Less time spent preoperatively being interviewed by anesthesiologist
 - Less time spent postoperatively being monitored by recovery nurse
- Get to talk to surgeon during the surgery for post-operative advice on how to care for hand, rehabilitation, etc.
- Get to see repaired structures working during the surgery. (For example, repair of tendon lacerations or tendon transfer to ensure appropriate tension)
 - For the patient this can improve understanding of the repaired pathology to enhance compliance in rehabilitation
 - For the surgeon, the ability to see a repaired structure in action can avoid complications and increase likelihood of good outcome
- No need to fast and can resume regular diet immediately
- No need to change medication schedules
 - Diabetics can maintain their medication regimen since their diet is uninterrupted
 - Patients who require blood thinners can generally continue them. Avoid risks associated with being off blood thinner

Patient Satisfaction:

100 consecutive patients were polled postoperatively¹

- 91% found it was less painful or comparable to procedures done under local at the dentists office.
- 86% would prefer to be awake for further hand surgery
- 90% would recommend wide awake surgery to a friend.

¹ Teo I, Lam W, Muthayya P, Steele K, Alexander S, Miller G. Patients' perspective on wide-awake hand surgery—100 consecutive cases. *J Hand Surg Eur Vol.* 2013 38(9)