

**J. THEODORE SCHWARTZ, JR., M.D.**  
**INSTRUCTIONS FOR PATIENTS AFTER**  
**MEDIAL AND LATERAL RELEASE AND EPICONDYLECTOMY**

---

**DO NOT DRIVE OR OPERATE MACHINERY FOR 24 HOURS.**

Some anesthetics have delayed metabolism and can interfere with the ability to perform these tasks.

**DO NOT DRINK ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES FOR 24 HOURS.**

**DO NOT MAKE IMPORTANT DECISIONS OR SIGN LEGAL DOCUMENTS UNTIL THE NEXT DAY.**

**DO NOT EAT HEAVY OR LARGE MEALS UNTIL THE NEXT DAY.**

A heavy meal may be difficult to digest. Spicy and greasy foods should be avoided.

**DO NOTIFY PHYSICIAN IF YOU HAVE NOT VOIDED WITHIN SIX HOURS.**

---

**General Information:** During surgery a local anesthetic was injected into your elbow, so **after surgery your elbow, wrist, and fingers may be numb from 4 to 48 hours.**

**Pain Management:** Take prescribed pain medication for pain. Follow the direction on the package. If there are any questions regarding the pain medication, please call our office. If you wish, you may take over-the-counter pain medication such as acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (Advil, Nuprin, or Motrin), naproxen (Aleve) instead. **It is recommended to take pain medication with food.**

**Icing and Elevation:** To decrease swelling, it is helpful to elevate your hand above your heart and apply an icepack to your palm for the first 24 hours. You may use a sling if you wish for the first 24 hours after surgery, but remember a sling will typically keep your hand below your heart.

**Dressings:** Keep the dressing clean and dry. During surgery you will be placed in an elbow splint. If the ace bandage feels tight, unwrap the Ace bandage and rewrap it so it feels comfortable. Do not change the dressing or apply antibiotic ointment to the wound unless specifically instructed.

**Activities:** You are encouraged to move your exposed fingers as soon as it is comfortable so that they do not become stiff. At your post-operative appointment we will schedule you an appointment for that day with a physical therapist.

**Follow-Up:** You should have a follow-up appointment for approximately 14 days after surgery. If you do not have a follow-up appointment, please call the office to arrange one.

**If something seems wrong or out of the ordinary please contact the office at 925-355-7350.**

---

**CALL PHYSICIAN IMMEDIATELY IF YOU:**

- ✓ Observe excessive bleeding, drainage, redness, or swelling;
- ✓ Develop unexpected numbness, coldness, or change of color at operative site;
- ✓ Have extreme pain not relieved by prescribed pain medication, or a medication causes a reaction;
- ✓ Notice a foul odor emanating from surgical site, or have a temperature of 101° F or higher.
- ✓ If it is an emergency and you cannot reach your physician, go to the nearest emergency room or dial 911.