

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR PATIENTS AFTER  
WRIST FUSION  
J. THEODORE SCHWARTZ, JR., M.D.**

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**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.**

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**General Information:** During surgery, a local anesthetic was injected into your wrist. So after the surgery, **your fingers may be numb the first 4 to 48 hours.**

**Pain Management**

Take the prescribed medication for pain. Follow the directions 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 or Motrin), or naproxen (Aleve) instead. **It is recommended that you take pain medication with food.**

**Icing and Elevation**

To decrease swelling, it is helpful to elevate your hand above your heart and apply an ice pack 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. If the Ace bandage feels tight, unwrap the Ace bandage and rewrap it so it feels comfortable. Do not change the dressing, remove the splint, or apply bacitracin to the wound unless specifically instructed.

**Showering**

Keep your dressing dry.

**Activities**

You are encouraged to move your exposed fingers actively at least 5 times a day to decrease stiffness in your fingers.

**Follow-up**

You should have a follow-up appointment for approximately 10 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.

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**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.