

Sheena Black, MD

Orthopedic Surgeon
Sports Medicine Specialist



www.sheenablackmd.com

Elbow – Post Surgery Instructions

Please read this entire handout before calling the office with questions.

Follow-Up Appointment: Date: _____ Time: _____ Provider: _____

Office Location: Frisco (3800 Gaylord Pkwy, Ste 810) McKinney (5220 W University Dr, Ste 300)

Weight-Bearing:

- NO heavy lifting** with the operative arm. Nothing heavier than a coffee cup.
- Non weight-bearing (Do NOT put any weight)** on the operative arm.

Dressing: Per checked boxes below. **Some bleeding on the post-operative dressing is normal and expected.**

- Soft dressing:
 - You may remove your dressing on **DAY 3** after surgery. You may shower after **DAY 3** and let water run over the incisions. Pat dry.
 - **Leave the small white tape strips or skin glue (dermabond) in place if applicable.**
 - Cover the incisions with a clean/dry sterile dressing.
- Splint – **DO NOT REMOVE** until you return to clinic – keep clean and dry.
 - Keep your surgical site covered while showering/bathing. You may use a plastic bag to do this. You may sponge bathe your hand and arm as necessary.
- Sling – use for comfort and while out in public

Activity/Exercise:

- Elevate your arm as much as possible when sitting to reduce swelling and pain
- **Home Exercises:** (perform exercises per boxes checked below)
 - Hand ROM: Use a stress ball or balled up pair of socks to gently squeeze your hand. 20 reps 5 times daily.
 - Wrist ROM: gently move your wrist up and down x 15 reps all directions. Do 3 sets of these 3 times daily.

Physical Therapy:

- Not applicable
- Please arrange for an appointment 3-5 days after surgery to begin physical therapy.

*****(Take your physical therapy prescription and protocol with you at that visit.)*****

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Medication Instructions

- You may resume your usual medications (unless otherwise instructed).

Prescription medications: You have been prescribed one or more of the following medications (per boxes checked below):

- Norco 5mg (hydrocodone)/ 325mg (Tylenol/acetaminophen) 1-2 tabs every 4-6 hours **as needed** for pain
 - Norco 10mg (hydrocodone)/ 325mg (Tylenol/acetaminophen) 1-2 tabs every 4-6 hours **as needed** for pain

 - Zofran 4 mg tabs – 1 tab q8h **as needed** for nausea.
 - Colace (Docusate) stool softener- 100mg twice as day for constipation while using narcotic pain medicine
 - Aspirin Enteric Coated 81 mg - 1 tab by mouth **daily** for **30** days to prevent blood clots.

 - _____
- **Medication Refills: BE PROACTIVE!** Please contact the office at 469-800-7200 during office hours at least **48-72 hours before** you run out of medication. Narcotic pain medication refills must be sent by Dr. Black electronically to the pharmacy.
 - o *****Please note***The on-call staff will NOT refill pain medications, under any circumstance!**

Driving

- **You are prohibited from driving while taking narcotics.**
- Driving reflexes and coordination can be impaired for several weeks after surgery. Most patients DO NOT drive prior to their first post-surgery appointment.
- The decision regarding when you can return to driving is different for every patient and depends on the surgery side, surgery type, coordination, narcotic pain medication usage, and comfort returning to driving.

Icing/ Cold Therapy: (NOT applicable if in hard splint/cast)

- You may use ice 3 times a day for 30 minutes (or as directed) to minimize swelling and pain.
- Do NOT apply ice directly to skin to avoid skin burns. Check your skin regularly for blisters or a whitish blanched color.

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Most orthopedic surgical procedures are uneventful. However, medical complications can occur, and we want all surgical patients to have an awareness of the things to look for and actions to take in the event of a postoperative complication. This can help to prevent an adverse outcome.

PLEASE BE ADVISED OF THE FOLLOWING:

1. **FEVER** – Low grade fever is common after bone and joint surgery, particularly in the first two days. A little fever during this time is not of concern. If your temperature rises above 101.5° F please call the doctor on call for advice.
2. **INFECTION**- Please have a member of Dr. Black’s orthopedic surgery team evaluate you if there is concern for infection after surgery (*Not your PCP or local emergency room physician unless it is an emergency*).
 - Fever, chills, redness, increased drainage, elevated blood sugars, or increasing pain may be signs of an infection.
 - If you have any of these symptoms or questions, call 469-800-7200 during office hours.
3. **BLEEDING** – It is common to get a minor amount of bleeding that can soak through the bandages or surgical dressing. This is not of concern. Please call regarding excessive bleeding. Notify your surgeon if the wound drains any fluid later than five days after surgery.
4. **CARDIOVASCULAR** – If you develop chest pain, shortness of breath, or fainting spells, then you need to go to the emergency room for evaluation. If your symptoms are severe then call 911 rather than going in a private vehicle. Someone should notify the Orthopaedic Associates of Dallas doctor on-call and your family doctor as well.
5. **BLOOD CLOTS** – Orthopaedic surgery patients are at risk for blood clots, especially after lower extremity surgery. Please be sure to notify your surgeon if you or someone in your family has a history of such clots or any type of clotting disorder.

Obesity or use of oral contraceptives can increase the risk of blood clots. Women should consider not taking oral contraceptives while unable to walk normally without crutches, brace or cast on the leg.

Traveling after surgery - Realize that long air flights or car trips may also increase the chance of blood clots. You can lessen the risk of DVT by taking short breaks to either walk around or pump your foot against resistance (like stepping on the gas).

Signs of blood clots may include calf pain or cramping, diffuse swelling in the leg and foot, as well as chest pain, coughing, or shortness of breath. Please call if you recognize any of these symptoms.

6. **CONSTIPATION** – It is common to become constipated from taking narcotic based pain medications so you may need a stool softener / laxative. It is recommended that you take Dulcolax 100mg twice per day as needed, and this is available over the counter at any pharmacy. Increase your fiber and water intake after surgery to help avoid this.

The main number of Orthopaedic Associates of Dallas is 469-800-7200 is answered 24/7, but should not be used for emergency situations. It is best to use 911 first in a true emergency, then call and notify us of the situation.