

Trigger Finger Release Post-op Instructions: Regional Plastic Surgery Center

Wound Care:

- After surgery, a bulky dressing will be placed on your hand and wrist. Your dressing should be kept clean and dry. The dressing can be removed 1-2 days after surgery, and the hand lightly cleaned with soap and water. The incision should not be soaked in water, such as in a bathtub, or vigorously rubbed to clean. You may dry the incision by patting it lightly with a clean, dry towel. A new, clean dressing should then be applied over the incision, such as a band aid. Dressings should be changed daily and as needed for any bleeding or drainage.
- The incision should be inspected daily, and any abnormal drainage or excessive bleeding should be reported immediately.
- Your sutures (if necessary) will be removed at your clinic visit, usually 10-14 days after surgery. There may be a superficial crack or separation at the incision line, which is normal. The outer layers of the callused palmar skin do not grow back together well, but the deeper tissues will. The separation on the skin will grow out with time and be flat.

□ **Pain and Swelling:**

Elevate your hand to decrease swelling and discomfort. Mild to moderate swelling is expected after surgery. Your hand should be elevated above the level of your heart for best results. Local anesthesia has been used around the incision, which may cause numbness of the fingers and may last for hours up to a full day. Discomfort may return as the local anesthetic wears off.

You will be prescribed a narcotic pain medication for pain management. Please take this as directed, and do not exceed the recommended dosing. Try to wean down as tolerated. These medications can cause constipation and you may want to use an over

the counter stool softener. Tylenol products may be used instead of the prescribed pain medication, but should not be used with the narcotic pain medication as they both contain acetaminophen, and overdose can occur. You may supplement your pain medication by using ibuprofen or Aleve for any breakthrough pain. It can help to stagger your pain medication with ibuprofen or Aleve as needed. If a refill of pain medication is needed, please call the office during regular business hours, Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. In general, refills will not be made after hours or on weekends, so please plan ahead.

Ice may be applied to the surgical area to help with pain. Avoid direct contact with the skin, as this may result in damage to the skin. Instead, wrap an ice pack or bag of ice in a towel before placing on the hand. We generally recommend icing 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off for the first 48 hours.

Driving:

To drive you must no longer be taking narcotic pain pills (plain Tylenol, ibuprofen, or Aleve is allowed). Also, you must feel strong and alert, and able to grip the steering wheel with both hands.

Exercises/Activity:

It is important to begin finger exercises after surgery to avoid finger stiffness. Exercises should be started the day of surgery and be done throughout the day, and are especially important during the first 4 weeks after surgery. Do the exercises 3-4 times a day, for 5-10 repetitions each, for 3-4 weeks after surgery. Exercises include opening and closing the hand, tendon gliding exercises (see below), and finger exercises (isolate the tip of the affected finger and bend and straighten the tip). Heavy lifting or strenuous activity should be avoided until permitted by your doctor, usually 3 weeks postoperatively. Hand therapy may be recommended for you following surgery.

Tendon Gliding Exercises



Straight



Hook



Fist



Straight Fist

Follow-up:

You should be seen in the office 10-14 days after surgery. Call the office if an appointment has not been made.

Adverse Signs or Symptoms:

Occasionally patients experience troubles after surgery and need additional medical attention. Such conditions that require medical attention include the following:

- Fever of greater than 101 degrees F
- New or different colored drainage from your surgical incision or spreading redness or increased pain.
- Chest pain or shortness of breath. Seek medical attention immediately if you develop sudden chest pain, shortness of breath, a rapid heartbeat, lightheadedness or dizziness. (

Questions/Concerns: (If you have any additional questions or concerns, please feel free to call our office