

Home Care after Hand Surgery or Fractures



Follow these instructions in addition to those on the General Home Care after Plastic Surgery sheet you received.

Hand Surgery or Fractures

- Leave the dressing and/or splint in place until your next visit to the doctor. Keep your dressing and splint clean and dry.
- Use pillows to elevate your hand above the level of your heart for the first 24 hours after your surgery. If throbbing pain occurs after 24 hours, continue to elevate your hand.
- You may shower if you put a plastic bag over the dressing, splint and/or cast. Secure the bag with tape above the dressing. You must keep your dressing dry.
- Do not lift anything with the hand that had surgery.
- Limit activity to keep from hitting your arm.
- Expect swelling. If numbness occurs or your hand turns cold, call your doctor right away at 614-293-8566.
- Move your shoulder and elbow five times every two hours while you are awake. This will prevent your joints from becoming stiff.

Carpal Tunnel Surgery

- Your doctor will tell you when you may remove your dressing.
- You may shower or bathe with the dressing if you put a plastic bag over the dressing. Secure the bag with tape above the dressing. After the dressing is removed, you may shower or bathe if you pat the incision dry with care.
- You may do gentle activities with your hand. Do not lift anything with the affected hand until after your first follow up visit with your doctor.

If you would like more written information, please call the Center for Health Information at (614)293-3707. You can also make the request by e-mail: health-info@osu.edu.

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- ▶ Upon request all patient education handouts are available in other formats for people with special hearing, vision and language needs, call (614) 293-3191.