

**Douglas Chin, M.D., Sc.M.M**

80 Grand Avenue, Suite 810 Oakland, CA 94612 (510) 451-6950 (510) 451-0785 fax

---

**CARING FOR YOUR HAND AFTER SURGERY**

**KEEP YOUR HAND ELEVATED FOR 5 DAYS FOLLOWING SURGERY**

Elevation of the surgical site above the level of the shoulder and heart will reduce swelling. In addition to causing pain, swelling can interfere with the blood supply to your hand, interfere with antibiotics, and interfere with wound healing. Unless I tell you otherwise, **please do not use arm sling**. Slings do not provide adequate elevation and tend to cause more harm than good.

**KEEP THE DRESSING AND SPLINT CLEAN AND DRY**

Getting the dressing wet can increase your chances for infection. Getting a hard splint wet can interfere with the immobilization needed to get your surgery to heal. Sponge bathing is preferable. If you must shower, please cover your entire arm in large plastic bag with a rubber band to protect it from any moisture.

**EXERCISE THE EXPOSED FINGERS TO PREVENT THEM FROM GETTING STIFF**

The most frequent complication of hand surgery is the stiffness that occurs from not moving joints for several days. Use exposed fingers for light activities such as eating and dressing.

Dr. Chin will instruct you on what exercises to perform following surgery. Please complete these exercises 5-10 minutes 4-5 times per day (every 4-6 hours)

- Hand "jumping jacks"
- \_\_\_\_\_

**THINGS TO LOOK FOR**

If any of the following are present, please call Dr. Chin's office.

- Fever
- Pain increasing in intensity despite pain medication
- Numbness or tingling in the fingers that was not present before surgery
- Finger tips that are blue or white instead of the normal pink color
- Redness and warmth in the finger or redness spreading up the arm
- Cast, dressing or splint that has come loose

During the evenings following your surgery, please tell the page operator that Dr. Chin operated on you today, and Dr. Chin will be paged. If there is no answer, please proceed to the nearest emergency room.

**DR.CHIN HAS PRESCRIBED THE FOLLOWING MEDICATIONS FOR YOU:**

**Antibiotics:** You must take these around the clock regardless of how well you feel. These are important for avoiding infections that may occur after operations. If they are making you feel ill, Please call Dr. Chin's office.

**Pain Medication(s):** Please take these as needed. Pain, once intense, is difficult to treat, so please take this medication if you feel that pain will increase. You may wish to take this medication before going to sleep to avoid being awakened by increase pain.

**Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CALL DR.CHIN'S OFFICE TO MAKE AND CONFIRM A FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENT**

Dr. Chin would like to see you in: \_\_\_\_\_ days.