

Edward Diao, MD
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Dr. Edward Diao (415) 362-8880
Orthopedic Surgeon

Homecare Instructions for Hand and Upper Extremity Surgery Patients

You were given an anesthetic for hand/upper extremity surgery today.

You may expect to be sleepy, have some nausea or vomiting, and have some discomfort, depending on the type of surgery. A sore throat is common if you've had a general anesthetic. Hand or arm numbness is common if you've had a local or regional anesthetic.

We recommend you:

- Return directly home so that you can rest for the remainder of today.
- Begin with light diet (clear juice, soup, jello) then progress to more solid foods as tolerated.
- Drink as much water and non alcoholic beverages as you can.
- **Do not drive a car or operate hazardous machinery for at least 24 hours.**
- **Do not make important personal or business decisions for at least 24 hours.**
- **Do not drink alcoholic beverages for 24 hours.**

Care of the incisions and Dressing:

Keep the dressing intact, dry and clean until your follow-up appointment.

Bathing:

You may bathe. However, keep the area dry. A plastic bag to cover the extremity works well.

For Pain:

Take the medication as prescribed by your doctor and his/her staff. If the medication is not effective, or if it causes side effects please notify Dr. Diao's office at 415-362-8880.

Swelling:

Keep your arm elevated at all times. Elevation of the extremity is essential to minimize pain and post-surgical complications. When sitting, prop your arm with pillows. When walking, keep your arm/hand above the level of your heart. Ice can be used. In the case that your hand becomes excessively swollen and your fingers are blue or look like sausages because your cast is extremely tight, please call the doctor's office immediately.

SLING USE

The sling is designed to help cradle the hand/wrist/arm that has just had surgery. It is not, however, very effective for elevation of the operated extremity. Therefore, the sling is helpful when one is out of the house and up and about to protect people from grabbing the hand or arm.

To maximally elevate the arm, it is best to take the arm out of the sling, and put the arm at shoulder height or rested on top of one's head. Alternatively, in a reclining position, the arm can be propped up on some pillows or some furniture. For night, the most effective way to elevate the arm is to take a soft pillow and wrap it around the arm and fastened that with a sash or belt. In that way, if one is moving around on the bed, the arm stays somewhat elevated and above the level of the heart.

If you have vomiting that persists for more than four hours, excessive drowsiness, pain that is not controlled by the prescribed pain medication, fever, increasing drainage, bleeding or redness at the surgical site, or if you have any other concerns, call your surgeon Dr. Diao at (415) 362-8880*

In an emergency, call your local hospital's emergency room.

* Press option 4 to reach the person on-call.

Patient Sticker

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Preparations for your Post-Operative Appointment

Return Appointment

Please, call Dr. Diao's office within 2 days after your surgery at (415) 362-8880 to make an appointment to see Dr. Diao for a follow-up appointment.

There is a possibility you may be referred to a hand therapy department after you see the doctor for a splint or treatment if necessary. If this is the case, we would like you to be prepared by having the following:

- If you're given a splint before your surgery, please keep it and bring it with you to your post-operative appointment. Even if your splint does not look like it may fit, it can be molded and adjusted to fit you.
- If you do have insurance, please bring your insurance information with you and also be prepared to make co-payments to Edward Diao, M.D. by personal check, cash or credit card.
- If you're covered by Workers Compensation Insurance, please bring your insurance information such as your claim number, claim adjuster's name and phone number, as we will need to get authorization from the insurance company to be able to provide the prescribed services.

These instructions have been explained to the patient or patient's representative and a copy given to the patient._____RN

Patient / Patient Representative Signature

Relationship to patient

Date

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