



Dr Steven Lawrie

Sunshine Coast Orthopaedic Clinic

POST-OPERATIVE HAND CARE

PATIENT NAME:

.....

Operation:

.....

Date of Operation:

The following is a guide to the care of your hand following surgery

- o Upon your discharge: you will be given a prescription for pain relief

It is very important to minimise swelling that you commence movement as soon as possible after surgery. Using pillows, keep your arm elevated above shoulder level when sitting or lying down. A sling is useful to keep the arm elevated while standing or walking

Move all joints and limbs that are not splinted

- o Open and close the fingers fifty times every hour while awake
- o Raise the hand high above your head at least ten times a day to prevent shoulder stiffness
- o Stretch the non-operated arm and legs on the hour
- o Keep your cast dry at all times

Dressings and Care Instructions:

- o Keep dressings clean and dry
- o A plastic bag may be required to seal the area when showering
- o Leave dressing intact until your review by the hand therapist or Dr L
- o If necessary, new dressings can be obtained from a chemist.
- o Leave your dressing for 3 – 5 days
- o If you have sutures they can be removed around day 12 post-op
- o You may experience tingling in the fingers for several weeks
- o the hand and wrist are often sensitive for several weeks

Once the wound is healed and your sutures are removed (at around two weeks)

Massage the scar with aqueous cream or Vitamin E cream four times a day as this helps to desensitize the wound

Your grip will be weaker and slightly painful but this will improve over time

Avoid heavy lifting and repetitive activities for 6-8 weeks following surgery

Report immediately if you have:

- o Severe pain, tenderness or swelling
- o Temperature higher than 38°
- o Unusual amount of drainage or odour
- o Any problems with the dressing
- o Nausea or vomiting
- o Any definite change in movement, colour, warmth or sensation
- o If your pain relief is not working

Lawrie Orthopaedics Pty Ltd
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Hand Therapy

You don't require hand therapy at this stage

You need to phone and arrange hand therapy indays with Katie Whittle on 07 5443 5474

Therapy has been arranged for you on:

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at.....

Your post-operative appointment with Dr Steven Lawrie has been made for:

Date:/...../2007

Time:am/pm

Contact Numbers:

Nambour General Hospital-Ward 1E

5470 6929

Sunshine Coast Orthopaedic Clinic

• Dr Steven Lawrie

5493 3994

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5413 9100