

POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS ELBOW SURGERY

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Operation:

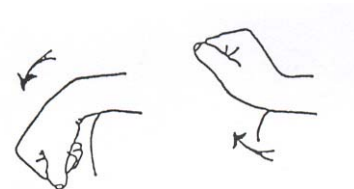
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Post operative Instruction:

1. Please elevate your hand and forearm on pillows to reduce swelling.
2. Keep your bandage or plaster cast intact, dry and clean.
Use a plastic bag to protect your cast in the shower.
3. If a sling was provided, please wear it when you are up and about.
4. If your bandage or plaster is too tight you may notice increasing pain, and finger swelling, dusky colouration, or increasing numbness in your fingers. If this occurs, continue to elevate your hand, loosen or cut through the bandage with scissors and notify the hospital or Dr Wang if things do not improve.
5. Gentle exercises are helpful, to reduce stiffness. Do these exercises slowly, to the point of discomfort, not pain. Do two exercise sessions daily.

These exercises are:

- (a) Gently clench and unclench your hand five times.
- (b) Gently reach your hand above your head as if you are trying to touch the ceiling.
- (c) If you are NOT in a plaster cast:
 - i. Gently flex and extend your wrist five times.
 - ii. Keep your bent elbows tucked into your side. Turn your forearm only so that your palms faces upwards, then turn slowly so the palm face downwards.
 - iii. Within the confines of your elbow bandage, flex and extend your elbow gently.



6. In the first day or two after surgery – performing some general exercises will aid recovery. These include cough and deep breathing (to keep your chest healthy) and frequent short walks (to prevent deep vein thrombosis).

6. Pain Management:

A prescription for pain tablets will be provided by the hospital on discharge. Generally take **Paracetamol** regularly: 1 to 2 (500mg) tablets three times a day will reduce the need for stronger medication. For breakthrough pain eg. after exercise or at bedtime, take **Oxycodone** (tradename Endone or Oxynorm) 1 to 2 (5mg) tablets twice but no more than three times a day. This is a narcotic prescription, Oxycodone should be taken sparingly. It may make you lightheaded and nauseous and should not be combined with alcohol or sleeping pills. Anti-inflammatory medication (eg Naprosyn, Mobic, Voltaran etc) can be taken as well if necessary.

7. Post operative appointment has been made at 7-14 days after surgery.

With regards to work, generally only very light activity with the operated hand is appropriate and this could commence at 14 days after surgery. You should not drive a motor vehicle or operate machinery until after your post operative appointment.