



## POST OP INSTRUCTIONS – THUMB ARTHRITIS SURGERY

- **Keep hand and arm elevated most of the time.**
- The numbness from surgery can last up to 24 hours with a block. If you have a catheter, it may be longer.
- Keep the splint on. It is important to keep it clean and dry. Use a bag over it when showering or while taking a bath.
- Most likely, your fingers will be free. Your thumb will be in the splint. You should move the fingers, even if you use the other hand to move the fingers slowly to prevent them from becoming stiff.
- **Don't lift anything with the affected hand.**
- **If you think the bandage or splint is too tight, it probably is.** Please call us. It is OK to have someone help you unwrap the ace and rewrap it. The plaster splint underneath can also get dislodged. Remember, you were feeling nothing when it was put on, therefore there may be some pressure points that irritate the skin. If you think there is a problem, please call us so we can get you in to change the splint.
- If you had surgery on your dominant hand, writing will be difficult. Don't push it.
- **Call us to be evaluated for any redness, increased heat or anything that looks like an infection.**
- **An increase in pain days out from surgery usually means you are doing too much with the arm.** If it continues despite rest, please call.
- It is going to take a long time for your hand and thumb to be normal again. There is no way to speed up the healing process. In addition, your thumb/hand wasn't normal to begin with. Muscles and strength are gone due to long standing arthritis. The best thing to do is to protect the surgery and follow our directions.
- Please call the office if you have any questions or concerns.

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