

## **Dr. Biswas' Instructions following Ganglion Cyst/Mass Removal Surgery**

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### **Dressing and Wound Care**

- After surgery, you will be in a bulky dressing (bandage) with a plaster splint that goes from the hand to the middle of the forearm, with the fingers free. The splint is similar to a cast. The splint can not be removed and must be kept dry.
- When showering or bathing, cover the splint and your hand with a plastic bag to keep everything dry. The splint protects the incision and the surgical repair, as well as lessen swelling.
- Elevate your hand above your heart as much as possible to lessen swelling and pain. Pillows and blankets under the arm are helpful when you go to sleep.

### **Pain Management**

#### **- Take the following medication as directed:**

- Prescribed narcotic every 4–6 hours for pain. You may take Naproxen, 2 hours after the narcotic if you are still in pain.
- Zofran every 8 hours as needed for nausea.

#### **Do not take Tylenol with the Percocet.**

#### **Pain Medication Tips:**

- Do not drive while taking pain medications.
  - Do not drink alcoholic beverages while taking pain medications.
  - Pain medication should be taken with food as this will help prevent any stomach upset.
  - Often pain medications will cause constipation. Eat high fiber foods and increase your fluid intake if possible.
  - To alleviate constipation, purchase a stool softener at any pharmacy and follow the recommended directions on the bottle.
- If you have uncomfortable side effects from the pain medicine, please call our office at 630.920.2350

### **Driving**

- Do not drive if you are taking narcotic pain medication. It is not safe. The medicine can make you drowsy and delay your reaction

- Once you are no longer taking the medicine, you may drive as soon as you can comfortably grip the steering wheel with both hands. It is generally best to avoid long drives until the initial dressing and plaster splint is removed.

### **Activity**

- Move your fingers to help prevent stiffness. Try to bend (make a fist) and straighten your fingers 5 to 6 times a day.
- It is important to exercise your shoulder several times a day by lifting your arm overhead to minimize stiffness.
- Do not lift anything heavier than a cup of coffee or full soda can (about 1 -2 lbs) until sutures have been removed.
- You can use your hand for very light activities of daily living, such as eating, writing, typing, getting dressed, and brushing your teeth. However, pain and stiffness may make it hard to do these things for 2 - 4 weeks.

### **Follow-Up Plan**

- When you leave the surgery center, you should have a Follow – up already 10-14 days after surgery. Your dressing and sutures will be removed. At this visit, you will be placed into a removable brace or a full cast (if a complex injury) for the next 4 weeks.
- You will be referred to a hand therapist in our clinic to start range of motion exercises for your elbow, wrist, and fingers as well as exercises to decrease swelling and scarring. You will see a therapist once per week for 4 weeks. You may be referred to a therapist closer to your home for future visits if that is more convenient for you.
- Do not do any weight-lifting or strengthening exercises without talking with your surgeon or occupational therapist.