

Discharge Instructions for Pediatric Elbow Fracture Surgery

Wound Care:

- Keep dressing/splint on until your first postoperative appointment. The splint is not removable it serves the purpose of protecting the fracture that has just been repaired.
- It is very important to keep the splint dry. If it becomes wet, it will soften and water is trapped against the skin/incision. If this happens, call the office immediately.
- While showering place a large plastic bag over the arm and securely tape just below the shoulder. Keeping the hand elevated during the shower will prevent the bandages from getting wet.
- Do not submerge in water until at least 6-8 weeks after surgery.
- If sutures were placed, they will be removed during your second post-operative appointment (14 days after surgery)

Activity:

- Use sling for comfort
- Elevate the operative arm above your heart, fingers pointing up, continuously for 72 hours to help decrease post-operative swelling.
- To prevent swelling and stiffness make a fist and fully straighten the fingers out 10 times an hour while awake.
- Avoid pushing / pulling / or lifting anything heavier than a pencil.

Medications:

- If your child was taking prescription medications prior to surgery, please resume all medications in addition to the medication prescribed for post-operative pain. If you have questions regarding those medications that you were on prior to surgery, please contact your pediatrician.
- Take pain medications as needed. Please confirm correct dosing with pharmacist and make sure the acetaminophen recommended daily maximum dose is followed to prevent liver damage.
- If you feel the narcotic pain medication is too strong, you may use acetaminophen instead. Avoid taking ibuprofen since it has been shown to delay bone healing.

Ice:

- Use ice pack for first week.
- Apply ice 20 minutes every 4-6 hours.
- Ice or cold pack should never be applied directly on the skin as this may cause skin injury. A cloth or towel should always be used as a barrier to protect the skin.

Diet:

- Resume a normal diet.
- If your stomach is upset, try bland, low-fat foods like plain rice, broiled chicken, toast, and yogurt.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Often the pain medication causes constipation, if this occurs you may try an over the counter pediatric laxative / stool softener or take a fiber supplement every day.



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Follow-up Appointments:

- Your first post-operative appointment will be in 10-14 days.
- If you do not have these appointments set up, please call the appointment line
- If there is an emergency and you are unable to reach anyone in the office, please go straight to the emergency room.

When to call for help:

Call 911 anytime you think you may need emergency care. For example, call if:

You pass out (lose consciousness).

You have severe trouble breathing.

You have sudden chest pain and shortness of breath, or you cough up blood.

You have severe nausea or vomiting.

Call the office if:

You have pain that does not go away after you take pain pills.

You have a fever over 100.4°F.

You have loose stitches, or your incision comes open.

Your incision keeps bleeding 3 days after your surgery.

You have signs of infection, such as redness around incision or pus draining from your incision.