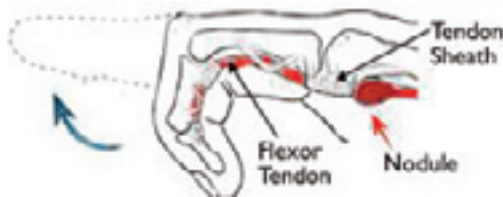


# Trigger Finger Discharge Instructions



## Wound/Dressing Care

- ✓ You may remove your dressings and shower in 48 hours. If they are present, do not remove the steri-strips that are covering the wound, they will fall off on their own. No soaking your incisions in a bathtub, sink, hot tub or swimming pool, until your incision has completely healed, which usually takes 2-3 weeks. Do not apply any ointments, lotions, or creams to your incision.
- ✓ Bleeding during the first 24 hours following surgery is normal. If bloody drainage is noted through the dressing, do not remove the existing dressing, but apply a fresh layer of dressing and secure it in place. Apply direct pressure over the area where the drainage is noted. Lie down, elevate your hand and arm, and apply ice (leaving it in place for 20 minutes at a time). If the drainage continues, call your physician's office for further instructions.
- ✓ Handwashing is the single most important method to prevent the spread of germs and bacteria. It is important to wash your hands before and after touching any area near your incision.

## Activity

- ✓ Keep the operative hand and forearm above the level of your heart as much as possible. This should be accomplished by using pillows to elevate your hand while you are sitting or lying down or resting your hand on your opposite shoulder while you are up walking.
- ✓ Ice packs can be used to help minimize swelling and decrease pain. These should be applied to your surgical site for approximately 20 minutes at a time. Care should be taken during cold application by using a towel between the skin and the ice. The ice should be alternated on for 20 minutes and off for 20 minutes frequently during the first several days and then as needed.
- ✓ Avoid activities which may injure your hand or fingers.
- ✓ Move all non-operative joints of the extremity such as shoulder, elbow, wrist and fingers not affected by the surgery.
- ✓ Ankle flexion (pumping both of your feet, like you are applying and releasing the brakes) should be performed at least ten times every hour while you are awake. This will help to reduce your risk of developing a blood clot in your legs.
- ✓ Coughing and deep breathing (taking three deep breaths and then coughing) should be performed once hourly while you are awake to improve oxygenation.

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## Medications

You may resume your routine medications unless otherwise instructed by your physician.

A prescription for pain medication may be given to you by your physician prior to your discharge. These medications are used to reduce your pain and must not be taken any more often than prescribed. In an effort to keep your pain under good control, you should take the pain medication routinely as prescribed during the first 24-48 hours following surgery. As you become more comfortable, you may substitute acetaminophen (Tylenol) for prescription pain medication.

- ✓ Prescription pain medication should be taken with food to help prevent an upset stomach.
- ✓ Do not drive while taking prescription pain medications.
- ✓ Do not drink alcoholic beverages while taking prescription pain medications.

Often pain medication and inactivity cause constipation. Eat high fiber foods (fresh fruits, vegetables, bran) and increase your fluid intake if possible. Also, you may purchase Pericolace, a stool softener, at any pharmacy to aid in alleviating your constipation. Take this medication as directed.

## Contact your doctor if you:

- Have any questions or problems.
- Develop a temperature greater than 100.5 that is not associated with any other illness. It is not necessary to take your temperature every day. If you feel feverish, take your temperature.
- Develop new or more severe pain that cannot be controlled by the pain medication.
- Develop redness, warmth, swelling, drainage, foul odor, or opening of your incision.
- Have persistent numbness or tingling in your arm or hand.
- Develop pain, swelling, warmth, or redness in your calf, call your doctor as these could be the symptoms of a blood clot. If you develop chest pain or shortness of breath, please go to the nearest ER or call 911.

## Follow Up

You should be seen in the office for follow up 2 weeks following your surgery. Call your physician's office today or tomorrow if you do not already have an appointment.

If you are having problems and need to be seen, you can use our Orthopaedic Urgent Care between 8am and 8pm Monday through Thursday, 8am to 5pm on Friday.