

## **ELBOW OLECRANON BURSECTOMY POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

### **When you get home:**

- Rest for the remainder of the day
- Be safe stay in the care of a responsible adult for the first 24 hours
- Use ice as much as possible: it may not fully cool the elbow below the dressing but it is still beneficial.
  - **20 minutes on/20 minutes off for regular ice packs/frozen peas**
  - **If you are using a cold therapy machine, use it according to the manufacturer's instructions**

### **Pain Medication:**

- Take your pain medication – it is better to stay ahead of the pain
  - Oral Narcotic pain medicines (Vicoden, Norco, Percocet, Ultram, Codeine) help with pain but can cause drowsiness:
    - **Be safe don't drive, operate machinery don't mix it with alcohol**
  - Stomach upset
    - **Take with food or try over the counter Zantac or Tums**
  - Constipation
    - **Drink enough fluids, use fiber supplements (Metamucil, Senekot)**
    - **Take Prune juice or Milk of Magnesia if still constipated after 2 days**
- You may take anti-inflammatory medication to help with pain and swelling.
  - Some patients are prescribed Toradol (Ketorolac): Take every 6 hours for 4 days.
    - Ok to take with Pain Medications, not with other anti-inflammatories
  - After 4 days of Toradol you can take other anti-inflammatory medicines like:
    - **Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) Naproxen (Aleve), Lodine, Mobic, Celebrex**
      - **Go easy on the anti-inflammatory medications if you have stomach problems.**

### **Dressing and Wound Care:**

- You will have a soft bandage around the elbow.
  - You can change the bandage in 2 days (keep the Steri-strips on the skin).
  - You can shower two days after surgery – you can cover the incision using a plastic bag.
- It is good to keep even compression over the incision with the cotton wrap, to keep the fluid from returning.
  - Don't put the wrap so tight that the hand swells or goes numb.

### **Activities:**

- Sling: You will be in a sling for comfort – you can remove it if you like. At your first postop visit we will remove the suture.
- Driving: Only after you are SAFE, which means:
  - Off pain medications and able to control a vehicle safely.
  - It can be difficult to control a car with one arm in a sling or splint.

- You will be getting around your house well in a few days. Resume light activities (walking, etc.) after a few days.

**Exercises:**

- Begin exercises immediately:
  - Move your thumb and fingers around many times during the day
  - After a few days you can start some gentle elbow exercises.

**Problems or Questions? Call us at 973-340-1940**

- **Feel free to call us if you have any concerns or if you have any:**
  - **Unrelenting pain or increased swelling, numbness or high fever (above 101.5)**
  - **Continuous drainage or bleeding that is soaking your dressing/bandage.**
  - **Chest pain, shortness of breath.**