

# Discharge Instructions for Wrist Arthroscopy



You had a wrist arthroscopy. This is a surgical procedure that helps the healthcare provider diagnose and treat wrist problems such as fractures, cysts, and ligament and cartilage tears. Here are some instructions to help you care for your wrist after surgery.

## Activity

- Don't grip objects tightly or lift with your affected arm.
- Wear your bandage, splint, cast, or sling as directed by your healthcare provider.
- Keep your hand raised above the level of your heart as much as possible for the first 2 to 3 days after surgery. This will help reduce swelling.
- Do the exercises taught to you in the hospital, or as instructed by your healthcare provider.
- Don't drive a car until your healthcare provider says it's OK. And never drive if taking narcotic pain medicine.
- Ask your healthcare provider when you can return to work. If your job requires heavy lifting, you may not be able to return for several weeks.
- Keep in mind that full recovery can take 3 to 6 weeks.

## Home care

- Keep the dressing clean and dry. Your healthcare provider will tell you when and how to change your dressing.
- Shower as needed. Cover your wrist with plastic to keep the dressing dry.
- Use an ice pack or bag of frozen peas wrapped in a thin towel to reduce swelling. Keep the ice pack in place for 20 minutes, then leave it off for 20 minutes. Repeat as needed.
- Take pain medicine as directed.

## Call 911

Call 911 right away if you have:

- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath

## When to call your healthcare provider

Call your healthcare provider right away if you have:

- Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, or as directed by your healthcare provider
- Chills
- Fingers that are pale or blue

- Inability to move your fingers or hand
- Increased redness, tenderness, or swelling of the incision
- Drainage from or opening of the incision
- Increased pain with or without activity

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