

## UPPER EXTREMITY FRACTURE AND OPEN PROCEDURE DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

### DIET

- Begin with clear liquids and light foods (jellos, soups, etc.)
- Progress to your normal diet if you are not nauseated

### WOUND CARE

- Maintain your operative dressing, sling, and or splint till your postop visit.
- To avoid infection, keep surgical incisions clean and dry – you may shower by placing a large garbage bag or saran wrap over splint/dressing the day after surgery.

### MEDICATIONS

- You may elect to have a nerve block during your surgery which can help decrease your postoperative pain.. Also, pain medication is injected into the incision during surgery – this will wear off within 8-12 hours. Most patients will require some narcotic pain medication for a short period of time – this can be taken as per directions on the bottle. Use your narcotic medication wisely because after 2 weeks over the counter medications only will be prescribed given current DEA scrutiny.
- Common side effects of the pain medication are nausea, drowsiness, and constipation – to decrease the side effects, take medication with food – if constipation occurs, consider taking an over-the-counter laxative.
- Do not drive a car, operate machinery, or drink alcohol while taking the pain medication
- Resume your normal medication the day after surgery

### ACTIVITY

- Do not engage in activities which increase pain/swelling
- Keep the splint and sling on till follow up
- **Return to work** when your doctor recommends and you feel safe.
- **Driving**-you should not drive if you are in any restrictive device/brace/sling, ultimately the decision of safety is up to you.

### ICE THERAPY

- Begin immediately after surgery
- Use every 2 hours for 20 minutes daily till your postoperative visit.

### WHEN TO CALL YOUR DOCTOR

- Contact are office if any of the following are present:
  - Painful swelling or numbness
  - Unrelenting pain
  - Fever (over 101° - it is normal to have a low grade fever for the first day or two following surgery) or chills
  - Redness around incisions
  - Color change in operative extremity
  - Continuous drainage or bleeding from incision (a small amount of drainage is expected)
  - Difficulty breathing
  - Excessive nausea/vomiting