

General Information for Hand Surgery Patients

Please read the following information carefully

Information before your surgery...

The night before your surgery, please do not have anything to eat or drink after midnight. This includes water, candy, and mints.

The office or hospital will call you the day before your surgery to confirm your arrival time.

It is recommended that all patients wear loose, comfortable clothing on the day of surgery. Please do not wear any make-up, contact lenses or jewelry.

We recommend for our patients to quit smoking as soon as possible. Please do not smoke 2 weeks before and after your surgery, as this may cause complications with your healing process.

Regular prescription medicine can be taken as usual. If you need to take something on the day of your surgery, please use a minimal sip of water.

Aspirin (ASA) and other anti-inflammatory medication

The following medications should be stopped 7 days before surgery, as they can cause excessive bleeding and bruising during and after your surgery. Please consult Dr. Seal when you should restart the medication post-operatively:

- Aspirin (ASA). **Please discuss this with Dr. Seal.**
- Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication such as Ibuprofen (Advil), Naproxen and others.
- Anti-coagulants and blood thinners (Warfarin/Coumadin). **Please discuss this with Dr. Seal or the pre-operative nursing staff when they call to confirm your operation time.**
- Herbal medications - Check with your doctor.
- Vitamin E

Recreational drugs or alcohol should not be used 24 hours before and after your surgery. These can interact with your anaesthetic and/or post-operative pain medication and cause serious complications.

You will need to have a responsible adult accompany you to and from the hospital. There should also be someone who can stay with you 24 hours after your surgery. If you are traveling to Vancouver, please make arrangements to stay within the lower mainland overnight after your surgery.

Information for after your surgery...

1. You will be given a prescription for medication to make you more comfortable after your surgery. Take the medication as it is prescribed. During the first 2-3 days, do not wait to feel any discomfort, and plan to take the medication regularly. You should refrain from driving while taking these medications.
2. Keep your hand elevated as much as possible following your surgery. It should be at a level above your heart. When you sleep at night, you can place it on several pillows. This helps decrease the swelling and improve your level of comfort following surgery.
3. Your first dressing change will be at your follow-up visit. Keep the dressing/splint clean and dry. In order to shower, place a plastic bag over the dressing/splint with an elastic band at the base. Then hold the arm out of the shower, so as to not get it wet.
4. Your sutures will either be dissolvable and not need to be removed, or will be removed during a follow-up visit 7-10 days after your surgery.
5. You will be unable to perform any heavy lifting or strenuous exercise for a period of time following your surgery. This will be reviewed during your first follow-up visit, as well as, plans for any physiotherapy needed.
6. Please call our office to make a follow-up appointment for 1-2 week after your surgery.
7. After you leave the hospital, there are a few things to watch during your healing process. If you see any of the following, please call St. Paul's hospital at 604-682-2344 and ask to speak to the plastic surgeon on call:
 - **Pain and swelling in your legs, or shortness of breath**
 - **Elevated temperature**
 - **Redness around your incisions and/or drainage**
 - **Significant increase in pain not controlled by your medications**

If you have any questions during your post-operative course, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Seal, or our office.