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Elbow Surgery Postoperative Care Instructions

SLING:

- It is required to wear your sling.
 - For UCL repair/reconstruction, triceps tendon repair, distal biceps tendon repair, olecranon fracture fixation, epicondyle fracture fixation, ulnar nerve transposition, flexor/extensor tendon repair, or elbow replacement: you will wear your sling for 1-2 weeks.
 - If you had an elbow scope, you will wear your sling for comfort only.
- It is required to sleep in your sling **ONLY** if you had a procedure that requires you to wear your sling for 2 weeks.
 - It is recommended to sleep in a reclined position or in a recliner, however you can sleep flat if you remain in the sling.
 - Make sure your sling is sitting at 90 degrees at all times. Avoid having your sling positioned in a downward position to avoid swelling in the hand.

SHOWERING:

- Once your nerve block has worn off you may shower.
- Remove your sling and white socks. After showering, please place both back on.
- If you have a splint in place, **KEEP IT CLEAN AND DRY**. Cover the splint with a waterproof bag or cast protective cover.
- Please cover your stitches/dressings with Saran wrap or waterproof band aids. Keep the dressings clean and dry.
- Hang your arm down to your side and use your non-surgical arm to shower. Alternatively, a simple sling can be purchased at your pharmacy for use in the shower only and can be hung out to dry afterwards.

TED HOSE STOCKINGS:

- You must wear the white TED stockings on both legs for 14 days to reduce the risk of a blood clot.
 - You may take them off when you shower.
 - You may take them off to wash them.
 - After showering or washing them please put them back on both legs.

NSAIDS/ANTI-INFLAMMATORIES:

- It is generally acceptable to take NSAIDs (Motrin [ibuprofen], Aleve [naproxen], Tylenol [acetaminophen]) after your surgery. See the pain management handout for more information.

PHYSICAL THERAPY:

- Depending on your procedure you may start physical therapy the next day after your procedure.
 - For UCL repair/reconstruction, triceps tendon repair, distal biceps tendon repair, olecranon fracture fixation, epicondyle fracture fixation, ulnar nerve transposition, flexor/extensor tendon repair, or elbow replacement: physical therapy will start 1-2 weeks after your procedure.
 - For all other elbow procedures: physical therapy will start the next day after your procedure.
- Your rehab program is for 1 or 2 days a week (based on PT benefits through your insurance policy) for duration of at least 6 weeks.