

Discharge Instructions – St. Joseph’s Hospital



Elbow Surgery

Day of Surgery

- Bring 2-3 pillows so you can elevate your arm on the way home. Please leave pillows in your car during your surgery.

Care of the Surgical Site

- You may have some drainage from the incision. If you have a drain, Home and Community Care Support Services will be arranged.
- Once the sutures have been removed, you may shower and gently wash the incision with soap and water. Pat the incision dry.
- Do not soak in a bath or use a hot tub or swimming pool for 2 weeks.
- Do not apply any creams, lotions or powders on the incision.
- To help reduce swelling and pain:
 - Keep your arm elevated above heart level (supported on pillows) for up to 5 days
 - Use a covered ice pack front and back; apply for 20 minutes 4 times a day for 48 hours.

Activity

- Move your elbow as instructed by your surgeon or therapist.
- Wiggle your fingers and open and close your fist 4 times every hour.
- If splints have been provided wear these as instructed.
- Ask your surgeon when you can return to work and when it is safe to drive.
- **Do Not** lift anything with your operative arm until directed by your surgeon or therapist.

Follow Up

- Keep your follow up appointment with your surgeon. If you do not receive an appointment or need to change it, please call the surgeon's office to make other arrangements.
- If you have concerns about your care, please **contact your surgeon's office between 8:00 am and 3:00 pm**. Please leave a message if the phone is not answered immediately as the administrative assistant may be occupied and will return your call promptly.
- **For after-hours urgent assistance**, please go to your local emergency room or urgent care centre.

Pain pill prescriptions cannot be renewed after 3:00 pm. If you think you will run out of pain medications, please contact your surgeon's office between 8:00 am and 3:00 pm. You may also contact your family physician for renewals.