

Hand and Wrist Surgery (+/- bone graft) - Plastics

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

- Leave the dressing on your arm (and hip) in place until you see your surgeon. It is normal to have a small amount of drainage on your dressing. This is nothing to be concerned about.
- If you have a bulky dressing or cast, do not stick anything under it to scratch.
- Never trim or cut down the length of your cast.
- Do not get your cast or dressing wet. You may shower 24 hours after surgery (unless told otherwise) if you cover your dressing or cast with a plastic bag, secure it with tape and keep your arm elevated to avoid water leaking under the plastic.
- 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

- If you had regional anesthetic, you will use a sling for a short period of time until you have regained control over the movement and feeling in your arm. Once you regain the ability to control your arm, the sling can be removed and you can move your shoulder and elbow normally.
- Increase the amount of lifting, gripping and pushing with your hand as tolerated and guided by your pain. If it hurts excessively, avoid the activity.

Special Instructions:

- Wrist surgery: Wiggle your fingers and open and close your fist 4 times every hour.
- Hand Surgery: Do not move your hand until instructed by your surgeon and/or hand therapist.

Discharge Instructions – St. Joseph’s Hospital

- Bone Graft: If you had a bone graft taken from your hip, you may have more pain in your hip than your arm. It may hurt to move around for the first few days after surgery, but it is important to walk at least 4 times a day for 15 minutes.

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.
- **For after-hours assistance**, call St. Joseph’s Health Care London, 519-646-6000 and ask for the Plastic surgery resident on call.
- Please note that calls for pain medications cannot be accepted between the hours of 10 pm and 8 am. Call your surgeon’s office during working hours if a renewal is required.