

**Orthopaedic and Spine Institute  
21 Spurs Lane, Suite 245, San Antonio, TX 78240**

**[www.saspine.com](http://www.saspine.com)**

**Tel# 210-487-7463**

**Joel B. Nilsson, M.D., P.A.**

***POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS FOR PATIENTS WHO HAVE HAD  
HAND/WRIST SURGERY***

***Dressing:*** A dressing has been applied to your incision. The dressing is left on until your first office visit, unless otherwise specified by the physician or physician assistant. The dressing may become moist from blood or drainage this is not a cause for alarm. However, if the drainage soaks through the dressing please call the office. If there is an Ace wrap on your hand, you may loosen or tighten it, as needed.

***Wounds:*** The wound is closed using stitches. Also, there may be yellow xeroform gauze over your incision to enhance healing. These strips and dressing are changed as needed at your post-operative visit.

***Activity:*** Elevate your hand above your heart at all times. This will reduce pain and swelling. If you use a sling, make sure your hand DOES NOT slip down below heart level. It is best to keep your hand over your head like the Statue of Liberty.

***Exercises:*** Remember to move your shoulder and elbow 3-4 times a day to keep them loose. You may raise your arm above your head to stretch your shoulder and move your elbow back and forth as much as your dressing will allow. You are encouraged to gently move your fingers as much as your dressing will allow unless otherwise directed by your surgeon.

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**Bathing:** Keep your wound clean and dry. Do not allow your incision to get wet unless otherwise specified by the physician or physician assistant.

**Pain:** Upon discharge from the hospital you should have a prescription for pain medication. Please take the pain medication with food. Do not drink alcoholic beverages or drive if you are using pain medications.

**Precautions:** If you develop a fever (temperature greater than 101 degrees Fahrenheit or 38.3 Celsius) or chills, or any undue symptoms such as unexpected pain, redness, swelling in either leg, rash, blisters, numbness, tingling, itching, hives or shortness of breath, please contact our office. Problems following this type of surgery have been minimal; however, if you have a problem or question, do not hesitate to call the office at 210-487-7463. The answering service will handle your call to the office after hours or on the weekend, and one of the Spine and Orthopedic Institute clinicians will return your call. **If you have an emergency, call 911.**

If you had regional anesthesia (block), especially of the arm, the anesthesia or numbness may persist for sometime. Special care should be taken against such injuries as burns from hot surfaces and cuts from knives until sensation has returned.

**Diet:** Start with light meals, progress diet as tolerated.