



POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Palmar Digital Fasciectomy (Dupuytren's)

Our goal is to ensure your safety, help you have the best outcome possible and help you feel comfortable during your recovery. Please follow these instructions on how to take care of yourself following your procedure.

GENERAL:

- It is important to keep the area elevated higher than your heart as much as possible for the first three days in order to reduce swelling. You may use pillows to support the area if needed.
- You may use an ice pack (20 minutes on, 2 hours off) to help control bruising and swelling, as required, for the first 2 days, but please ensure you keep your dressing dry.
- Please no strenuous activities and allow your hand to rest. After 2 days, you may use your hand for light activities (preparing meals etc).
- Your fingers may feel stiff following your procedure. This is normal. Please move your fingers as much as possible when you are able to do so. As you continue to move your fingers, you will notice a gradual increase in mobility. Please be patient as this can take time depending on your age, severity of the initial problem and associated conditions. It is possible that you may not achieve full extension in some joints.
- You can expect a slow, progressive improvement in symptoms and grip strength. Depending on your age, severity of initial problem and associated conditions, you may see continued improvement for up to 2 years.
- You may experience mild swelling or bruising, which can last up to 6 weeks or longer, but will improve with time.

PAIN:

It is normal to have pain and discomfort following your procedure. Please take pain medication as directed:

<input type="checkbox"/> Tylenol <input type="checkbox"/> Ibuprofen	<input type="checkbox"/> Prescription Medication: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Prescription Medication: _____
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If you have worsening pain not controlled by your medication, please contact our office for instructions.

THE DRESSING AND INCISION:

- Please keep your initial dressing intact for **2 (two) days.**
- After 2 days:
 - Remove all outer wraps and gauze. Please DO NOT replace them.
 - Wash the wound with soap and water. You may shower and then pat incision dry.
- Please check your circulation: Press on your fingernails - they should turn white then return to pink when the pressure is released.
- If your fingernail(s) is (are) blue or white, unwrap and rewrap the bandages so they are more comfortable. If this does not improve circulation, contact our office, your GP, or your local Emergency Department.
- It is normal to have redness localized to the sites where you have suture knots. You may also experience some drainage from these sites. You may wish to soak the area in Epsom salts and this will help ease the discomfort and drainage.

- It is also common and normal to see separation of the outer calloused skin along your incision as the deeper healthy tissue heals. This is part of the normal healing process and is normal. You may cover this area with gauze if you wish, but please do not pick at the calloused skin.

Your sutures will:

Dissolve on their own.

Need to be removed in _____ days.

ACTIVITIES:

- **3 days to 2 weeks after your surgery:**
 - Please ensure you are moving your fingers as much as possible. You may reintroduce activities as your pain and swelling allow.
 - Please no heavy lifting (15 pounds) for 4 to 6 weeks.
 - **Driving:** You must be pain free and off all pain medication. You may wish to have another licensed driver with you for your first short trip.
- **2 - 6 weeks after your surgery:**
 - Please no heavy lifting (15 pounds) for 4 to 6 weeks.
 - **Return to work:** You will likely be ready to return to work within 1-6 weeks depending on your occupation and type of physical exertion required. If you require a medical note for your employer, please contact your Patient Care Coordinator and they will be happy to help you
- Please refrain from smoking. Smoking may increase the chance of complications.
- Please do not swim in lakes, pools or use hot tubs for at least 2 weeks following surgery.
- It generally takes up to 6-8 weeks to feel normal again and resume regular activities. Please ask your surgeon if you have any questions about activity level during the healing process.
- Some activities requiring firm grip with impact (such as golf, racquet sports or operating heavy equipment) may be uncomfortable for several months after your procedure.

If you have any of the following, call our office (during business hours), your family doctor or present to the Emergency Department:

Signs of Infection:

- Pus-like drainage from the incision, grey or green.
- Redness that spreads beyond the incision.
- New pain, getting worse after 3 or 4 days.
- Fever, chills, sweats, aches and pains (flu-like symptoms).

Questions not addressed by this handout

Special Instructions: _____

FOR AFTER-HOURS EMERGENCIES:

- Call the Queensway Carleton Hospital at 613-721-2000 and the Plastic Surgeon on-call will be paged.

FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENT:

- Your Patient Care Coordinator will call you to confirm your appointment. Please call us at 613-232-7777 if you have any questions or concerns.

YOUR FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENT HAS BEEN SCHEDULED FOR: _____