

Overview:

You have had an open Dupuytren's fasciectomy, which means the cords of your Dupuytren's contracture have been removed. You have stitches in place and your hand is in a splint.

After Surgery:

During surgery we put freezing in place to help with pain control. The freezing usually lasts between 5-8 hours. As the freezing comes out you will begin to feel a tingling sensation in your fingers. This is the time when you should begin taking your pain medication.

It is important that while your hand is in the splint the first day after surgery, that you keep it elevated above the level of your heart to reduce pain and swelling. You may also want to sleep with your hand and arm elevated on pillows to help reduce pain and swelling.

At one week post operatively you will have your splint removed by your hand therapist and you will begin slight motion of your fingers in order to help keep you moving your hand, but NOT using it. It is important to protect your incisions and allow them to heal.

Your hand therapist will teach you exercises and will also fit you with a night-time splint if it is needed.

Incision Care:

Remove your dressing two days after surgery. You should wash your incision with running water and a mild/unscented soap (**DO NOT** submerge in water- dishwater, bath water, etc.), pat dry, and apply a thin layer of Polysporin or Vaseline and a band aid. Stitches are usually removed at 2 weeks post operatively.

Do not do any activity that hurts or causes pain at your surgery site.

Pain Management:

The first few days after your operation, you may have pain at the surgical site. The nerve pain that you may have had before should improve and it will be replaced by pain from the surgical release. It is common that there may be some numbness in the area of your operation for a while after surgery (depending on how tightly your nerve was compressed). This should get better over time.

To manage pain, take Tylenol and Ibuprofen together every 4 hours for the first 48 hours after your surgery. If you are still in pain, you can also take one of your prescribed pain medications in addition to the Tylenol and ibuprofen. After 48 hours try to stop taking the prescription pain medication. DO NOT TAKE MORE TYLENOL OR IBUPROFEN THAN WHAT IS RECOMMENDED ON THE BOTTLE IN A 24 HOUR PERIOD.

IMPORTANT:

The surgery may be performed under general anaesthetic therefore must not operate motor vehicles, boats, power tools or machinery for the first 24 hours. You may drive after three days or when you are no longer taking narcotic pain medication.

Please note that the Motor Vehicle Act of BC 195 (1) prohibits operation of a motor vehicle if "the control of the driver over the driving mechanism of the vehicle... is obstructed." Driving with a hand injury or cast in place that impairs your ability to hold the steering wheel is therefore in violation of the Act. You may resume driving once you have return of function to your operated hand and no longer require narcotic pain medication.

If you experience increasing rather than decreasing pain, bleeding not controlled with pressure, excessive swelling or bruising, increased swelling or redness around the wound, increased drainage from incisions, foul odour, fever, chills, please call your surgeon's office. If you experience shortness of breath, or arm or leg pain, call 9-1-1 or visit your emergency department.