

Fracture Pinning Post-Op Instructions

Overview:

You have pins that have been placed into your broken bone. The pins are there to hold the broken bone in place until they are removed. Pins are usually removed at 3 or 4 weeks after your operation, depending on your fracture.

You have a cast that is protecting the pins. DO NOT remove your cast.

After Surgery:

After your surgery you may have some numbness from the freezing that was placed at the time of surgery. Freezing usually takes around 5 hours to come out but may take greater than 8 hours.

For the first 3 days you should keep your hand elevated above the level of your heart to reduce pain and swelling. You may want to sleep with your arm elevated on pillows at your side in order to reduce swelling.

You are not to move the fingers that are in the splint. If there are fingers out of the splint, you should move them gently, but should not be using the hand for any activities.

Pain Management:

To manage pain, you should take both acetaminophen (Tylenol) and ibuprofen (Advil) together every 6 hours as directed on the medication packaging. Do not take more than the amount recommended per day on the manufacturer's instructions. Keeping you hand elevated, and occasional use of an ice pack can also help with pain control. The pain tends to be the worst in the first 2 days after an operation and then improves.

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.

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If you experience increasing rather than decreasing pain, bleeding not controlled with pressure, excessive swelling or bruising that occurs only on one side, increased swelling or redness around the wound, increased drainage from incisions or in your drains, 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.