

Heartland Neurosurgery
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Postoperative Care – Ulnar Nerve Release

1. The incision on your elbow should require very little care. You can take the dressing off three to four days after surgery. Cover it with a clean dressing or large bandage if there is any drainage. Do not apply any ointments or lotions to the incision. It is best to keep the incision clean and dry. Cover your elbow with plastic wrap or a plastic bag when you shower. Do not immerse the elbow in water. Be sure to pat dry the elbow if it does get wet.
2. DO's
 - . Do get plenty of rest, eat a well balanced diet, and drink plenty of fluids.
 - . Do elevate your arm above your heart for the first 24 hours after surgery. This will help with swelling and throbbing.
 - . Do move your fingers. You may use your hand for light daily activity such as eating, brushing your teeth, etc.
 - . Do keep your incision clean and dry.
 - . Do cover the elbow with a plastic bag or plastic wrap when you shower. Do not stand with the shower hitting the incision directly. Be sure to dry the area if it does get wet by patting gently with a towel or blow drying the area on cool or low.
 - . Do take prescribed medications for pain as indicated and necessary, don't wait for pain to become intolerable.
 - . Do loosen the elastic wrap if you think it is too tight and your fingers tingle or turn bluish in color. Call the office if the symptoms don't improve after you loosen the bandage.
 - . Use common sense...**If it hurts, don't do it!**
3. DON'Ts
 - . Don't take a bath or immerse the elbow in water.
 - . Do not drive until one week after surgery or approved by provider.
 - . Do not lift anything over 5 pounds (approx. one half gallon of milk) until approved by provider.
 - . Limit the amount of bending you do with the elbow for the first week.
4. Expected recovery time and release to go back to work depends on your job and

healing time. This decision will be made by your provider.

5. Call the office at 319-226-9888 immediately if any of the following occur:
 - . Temperature greater than 101.5 degrees and you don't have a cold or the flu.
 - . Any severe change or increase in your pain or new weakness.
 - . Any new decreased sensation, numbness or tingling.
 - . Any redness or drainage from the incision or drain sites.

6. Follow-up in the office in two weeks with the nurse for suture removal and in about three weeks with the physician assistant/ nurse practitioner unless instructed otherwise. An appointment should have been made for you by the nurse when you left the hospital, if not, call the office at 226-9888 to schedule an appointment. If you have any questions regarding your appointment please call our office Monday – Thursday 8:30-12:00 or 1:00- 4:30 or Friday till noon.

7. Please check your prescription medications. If you are getting low and will need a refill, please call our office before 11:00 am **Tuesday** or **Wednesday** and your refill will be called in to the pharmacy sometime that afternoon. No prescriptions will be called in on Fridays as the physicians, PAs and NPs are in surgery all day during this time.