Elbow Fracture with Open Reduction and Internal Fixation (ORIF)

Care After Surgery

Please read the instructions outlined below. Refer to these instructions for the next few weeks. These discharge instructions provide you with general information on caring for yourself after surgery. Your caregiver may also give you specific instructions. While your treatment has been planned according to the most current medical practices available, unavoidable complications occasionally occur. If you have any problems or questions after discharge, please call your caregiver.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- It will be normal to be sore for a couple weeks following surgery. See your caregiver if this seems to be getting worse rather than better.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- Use showers for bathing, until seen or as instructed.
- Change dressings and see your surgeon as directed.
- You may resume normal diet and activities as directed or allowed.
- Use your elbow as directed.
- Make an appointment to see your caregiver for *suture* (stitches) or staple removal when instructed.
- You may use ice for 20 minutes, 4 times per day for the first day. Never place the ice pack directly on your skin. Use a towel between the ice pack and your skin. Be especially careful using ice on an elbow because icing for too long may damage the nerves which are close to the surface.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- There is redness, swelling, or increasing pain in the wound area.
- Pus is coming from the wound.
- An unexplained oral temperature above 100.4° F (38° C) develops.
- You notice a foul smell coming from the wound or dressing.
- The wound edges break open after sutures or staples have been removed.
- You develop increasing pain.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You develop a rash.
- You have difficulty breathing
- You develop any reaction or side effects to medicine given.

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