Elbow Arthroscopy
Care After Surgery

These discharge instructions provide you with information on caring for yourself after surgery. Refer to these instructions for the next few weeks. Your caregiver may also give you specific instructions. Your treatment was planned according to the most current medical practices. However, unavoidable complications sometimes occur. If you have any problems or questions after discharge, call your caregiver. **Elbows are often swollen, stiff, and painful following surgery.** The **recovery time will vary** with the procedure done. Splints, casts or bandages will be worn for various amounts of time. If physical therapy and exercises are prescribed by your surgeon, follow them closely.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Avoid gripping or lifting heavy objects.
- 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 if necessary or as directed.
- You may resume normal diet and activities as directed or allowed.
- Make an appointment to see your caregiver for *suture* (stitches) or staple removal when instructed.
- You may use ice for twenty minutes four times per day or as directed by your physician to speed the healing process and help with discomfort.
- Do range of motion exercises with elbow as directed.
- Keep your elbow elevated and wrapped to keep swelling down and to decrease pain. This also speeds healing.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- There is redness, swelling, or increasing pain in the wound or joint.
- Purulent drainage (pus) is coming from wound.
- An unexplained oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C) develops.
- A foul smell comes from the wound or dressing.
- There is a breaking open of the wound (edges not staying together) after sutures or tape has been removed.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

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

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