

## POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS: HAND OR WRIST SURGERY

### FROM HOSPITAL TO HOME

- ❖ You must be accompanied by an adult who can drive you home after surgery.
- ❖ You may have some dizziness from the effects of anesthesia and pain medications.
- ❖ You cannot drive, operate machinery, drink alcohol, or make critical decisions for at least 24 hours.

### SURGICAL DRESSING

- ❖ Your hand/wrist will be in a splint, this must remain dry at all times.
- ❖ You can shower if you are able to keep the splint dry.

### MEDICATIONS

- ❖ A narcotic pain medication will be prescribed to take as needed- please read and follow the instructions on the bottle.
- ❖ Nausea and/or vomiting is a side effect of narcotic medication- if this should happen, consider changing to liquid diet and decreasing activity level.
- ❖ Constipation is another side effect of narcotic medication- you will also have a prescription for a stool softener.
- ❖ While taking narcotic pain medication you cannot drink alcohol or drive.
- ❖ Try to wean off the narcotic pain medication as soon as your pain allows. You can transition to over-the-counter Tylenol (acetaminophen) as needed.

### ACTIVITY

- ❖ You will be given a sling for comfort. Please use until your first postoperative visit.
- ❖ Elevate the hand/wrist to reduce pain and swelling.

### APPOINTMENTS

- ❖ You will see Dr. Kim 2 weeks after surgery.
- ❖ For questions or concerns, please contact the surgery scheduler directly or call 520-784-6200.
- ❖ You should schedule a physical therapy appointment to begin approximately 2-4 weeks after surgery. The timing will be discussed during your postoperative visit.