

## Post - Operative Instructions

### Expected pain and management

- During the procedure local anaesthetic was injected which should numb the operative site for 6-8 hours after you procedure.
- Once the local anaesthetic wears off you may begin to feel some discomfort for which you should take:
  - Panadol / Panadeine 2 tablets every 4-6 hours for the first 24 hours and continuing as required
  - Anti-inflammatory e.g. Neurofen can be used in addition to Panadol / Panadeine if required
- For larger procedures you may be discharged with stronger pain relief such as Panadeine Forte/Endone. These medications should be taken according to instruction given by the prescribing doctor and pharmacist.
- Elevation of the operative site is important and will assist with post-operative pain management. We recommend that you wear a sling for 1 week with your arm elevated.
- If your pain is not controlled with the above measure contact WPRS for advice.

### Wound Care

- Please keep your plaster and dressing dry.
- Please do not remove your plaster or dressing.
- If your plaster or dressing falls off, do not be concerned as it will not harm the operative site. You should contact WPRS during office hours for advice regarding the dressing.
- If any bleeding occurs upon discharge, please apply pressure to the area and elevate the arm above your head for 10 minutes and then reassess, if bleeding continues then repeat pressure for another 10 minutes. Contact WPRS if the bleeding does not cease following these measures.
- At 7-10 days you will have a post-operative wound check with the nurse at WPRS who will advise you on further dressings and wound care.
- After your initial review you will be referred to a hand therapist for rehabilitation (no Medicare rebates). Your outcome from surgery is heavily dependent on attending these appointments.

### Activity

- Avoid any strenuous activity following your procedure for 1 week.
- Your surgeon will let you know when you can return to your normal activities and work. Usual recovery is 4 weeks to regain full function in the hand, 6 weeks till you are able to lift heavy objects.
- Driving is not safe whilst you have the plaster on your arm. Your surgeon will inform you once it is safe to drive.

If you have any concerns please contact **WPRS** on (03) 5562 5330.

- In hours your call will be answered by a nurse and managed as appropriate.
- After hours you may leave a message or your call will be diverted to the on call Plastic Surgeon.

In the unlikely event you are unable to contact anyone at WPRS then call **St John of God hospital** on (03) 5564 0600.