

**POST- OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**  
**PROCEDURE: DISTAL RADIUS FRACTURE**

- Dressings: Your wrist is in a plaster splint wrapped with an elastic bandage wrap. Please do not remove this splint.
- Elevation: Keep your arm elevated above the level of your heart for as long as possible. For the 3 days following wrist fracture fixation you should have your arm elevated. Continued elevation over the entire first week is important.
- Cold Therapy: Apply ice to the surgical area in a waterproof bag for 20 minutes each hour you are awake. Always place a barrier between your skin and the ice such as a t-shirt or pillowcase.
- Finger Range of Motion: You may move your fingers as tolerated. Flex and extend all your fingers including the thumb several times an hour. Do not carry anything with your injured arm/hand.
- Pain Medication: You will be given a prescription for pain medication to be taken after surgery. This should be filled and ready for use when you return home from surgery. You should not drive, operate heavy machinery or participate in activities that require concentration while taking narcotic pain medications such as Percocet, Oxycodone, Norco, Vicodin or Tylenol with Codeine. You should take an over the counter stool softener while taking narcotic pain medications to prevent constipation.
- 1st Post-Operative Appointment: Please follow up 10 days after surgery for a wound check. At that visit the splint will be taken down if the incision is healed the sutures will be removed.
- When to call your surgeon:
  - Complications after surgery are fortunately very rare. Call the office if you have any of the following symptoms:
    - Persistent fever >101, chills
    - Increasing pain at the surgical site
    - Increased swelling/pain in the calf
    - New onset numbness or tingling
    - Hives or new rashes
    - Shortness of breath or chest pain
    - Persistent nausea/vomiting
- Prescription Refill Protocol: You **MUST** give your physician 48 hours notice for any medication refill. Many medications require an electronic prescription and cannot be filled over the weekend.