



# Carpal Tunnel Release

## Patient Postoperative Instructions

### Laith Al-Shihabi, MD

#### **0-2 weeks**

##### Pain medication:

- Use your prescription pain medication as needed to control pain.
- Begin taking pain medication before the local anesthetic around your surgery site wears off.
- Do not drive or operate machinery while taking narcotic/opioid pain medication.
- Unless you cannot take them for other medical reasons, it is ok to use over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medication (e.g. Advil or Aleve) in addition to your prescription pain medication. Do not take tylenol as your prescription already contains this medication.

##### Post-op Dressings:

- Keep the dressings in place for 3 days after surgery, then remove them and cover the incision with a waterproof band-aid.
- Elevation of the hand, along with ice on-and-off for 20 minutes at a time, will help with swelling and pain.
- It is ok to shower within the first 3 days after surgery, but the dressings must stay clean and dry. Place a waterproof covering over the dressings while bathing or showering (such as a heavy plastic bag that is sealed with Saran wrap). After removing the dressing, it is ok to let water run over the incision when washing your hands or showering, but do not immerse the incision (e.g. no swimming or bath tub) or scrub it.
- If the dressings get dirty, wet, or come apart please contact the office.

##### Motion:

- Start moving your fingers and the thumb as soon as possible.
- You can use your hand for light activity, such as eating, drinking, or using a computer.
- You do not have any lifting or carrying restrictions, but higher demand activities may cause surgical-site pain. Avoid applying strong pressure to your palm. Perform activities as your symptoms allow.

#### **2-6 weeks (First post-op visit)**

##### Splint:

- Sutures, if present, will be removed at your 2-week visit.
- No splint is necessary.
- You can begin gentle scar massage at 3 weeks after surgery.

##### Therapy:

- No therapy is necessary unless you have difficulty recovering your range of motion.

#### **6 -10 weeks (Second post-op visit)**

Schedule a second follow-up visit at 6 weeks in case you are still having problems or other symptoms. If you are doing well, no additional follow-up is necessary.