

POST OPERATIVE EXPECTATIONS

Regional nerve block: You may receive a nerve block at the time of surgery that is performed by an anesthesiologist under ultrasound guidance. This will numb your entire upper extremity for up to 24 hours postoperatively. You will be in a sling postoperatively to help support your arm. **The sling should only be worn for 24 hours and then removed to avoid elbow/shoulder stiffness.** If you had elbow or shoulder surgery, you will keep the sling on until your post op appointment, unless otherwise told. It is common to experience more pain once the nerve block wears off.

Pain medication: You will be prescribed narcotic pain medication post operatively. It is important to stay on top of the pain, rather than to wait until you are in pain to take the medication. Once the nerve block wears off, it is common to experience increased pain. For this reason, we highly recommend taking the pain medication the night of surgery and the morning after - even if you are not in pain.

- For mild pain, or if you do not wish to take the narcotic prescribed, you may take 2 over the counter Extra Strength Tylenol (500mg) every 6 hours, not to exceed 4,000mg in 24 hours.
- Please do not take any anti-inflammatory medications if you have a fracture - (Aleve, Advil, Ibuprofen, Naproxen) as these medications can slow bone healing.

Swelling/bruising: It is normal to have swelling and/or bruising post operatively in your hand and fingers. To minimize this, you should be doing the hand exercises given to you and elevating the affected extremity with your hand above your elbow. Elevation and movement of your fingers will decrease any swelling, stiffness, or pain you may experience.

Splint/Dressing: Your splint/dressing is **not** waterproof. You will need to cover this when you take a shower. The splint/dressing should be kept on and kept dry. If for any reason the splint gets wet, is removed, or is too tight, please call our office so we can have you come in to have it changed. Your splint will be removed by our office at your 2 week post operative appointment.

Driving: You may not drive for at least 2 weeks post operatively. You may not drive while taking narcotic pain medication or if you are immobilized in a cast or splint. For fractures, you may not be able to drive for 6 weeks - time frames vary for each patient and their injury.

Weight bearing: You may not lift, push, or pull anything greater than 1 pound (i.e., cell phone) for at least 2 weeks postoperatively. You may not be able to weight bear more than 1 pound for 6 weeks - time frames vary for each patient and their injury.

Physical/occupational therapy: Depending on the type of surgery, you will need to attend therapy. This will be approximately 2-3 times a week for 6-8 weeks. The time frame of therapy varies for each patient and their injury. Please find a location to attend therapy (we can provide a list of locations if you are unsure) so there is no delay in starting therapy, as it is an essential part of the healing process.

SURGERY FAQs

Q: What time is my surgery?

A: The time of surgery is dependent on many factors. The facility you are having surgery at will call you **the day before surgery** between 2pm and 6pm to let you know exactly what time you need to arrive and where to go upon arrival. Please refrain from calling our office regarding surgery times - start times are finalized the day before by the surgical facility.

Q: Do I need a ride to surgery?

A: Yes, you **will** need someone to drive you to and from the surgical facility. You will not be allowed to drive yourself home after surgery, nor will you be released alone or in a taxi/uber.

Q: Do I need to contact my insurance company to make sure my surgery is approved?

A: No, you do not. Our office will call your insurance company to get your surgery approved. If you would like to call to check your benefits and get any estimated out of pocket costs, you may, but the authorization for the surgery will be done by our office.

Q: What if I need FMLA/disability/work forms filled out?

A: If you have forms that need to be filled out regarding your injury/surgery, please forward them to our team email at hoateamjsh@ibji.com or send via fax to 630-794-8635. These forms can take up to 5 business days to complete.

Q: Is my splint/dressing waterproof? What can I cover it with?

A: No, your splint/dressing is not waterproof. You will need to cover it when you take a shower. We recommend wrapping the splint with saran wrap and covering it with a plastic bag. There are also splint/cast covers you may purchase from Amazon or Walgreens. If the splint/dressing gets wet, please call our office so we can schedule an appointment to have it changed.

Q: What if the pain medication prescribed makes me nauseous?

A: It is normal to have some nausea when taking prescribed narcotic pain medication. If you experience nausea or vomiting, you may purchase over the counter anti-nausea medication from CVS, Walgreens, etc. If that does not help, please contact our office.

If you have any questions or concerns post operatively, please do not hesitate to call our direct line at 630-455-2632 or email our team at hoateamjsh@ibji.com.

If unexpected concerns arise and you need assistance when we are not in the office on weekends or after business hours, please call our main office at 630-323-6116.