POST OPERATIVE EXPECTATIONS

Swelling/bruising: It is ***normal*** to have swelling and/or bruising in your hand and fingers. To minimize this, please do the hand exercises given to you and elevate the affected extremity with your hand above your elbow, the best you can. Elevating and moving your fingers will decrease any swelling, stiffness, or pain you may experience.

Nerve block: You may receive a nerve block at the time of surgery. This will numb your entire upper extremity for up to 24 hours postoperatively. You will be in a sling to help support your arm.

For hand and wrist surgery, the sling should only be worn for 24 hours and then removed to avoid elbow/shoulder stiffness.

For shoulder or elbow surgery, you will keep the sling on until your post op appointment.

Pain: It is important to stay on top of the pain, rather than to wait until you are in pain to take 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.
- It is normal to have some nausea when taking prescribed narcotic pain medication. If you experience this, you may purchase over the counter anti-nausea medication.

Splint: Your splint is **not** waterproof. You will need to cover this when you take a shower. If for any reason the splint gets wet, or feels too tight, please call our office. Your splint will be removed by our office at your 2 week post operative appointment.

Dressing: Please keep your dressing on until your post op appointment. Your dressing is **not** waterproof. You will need to cover this when you take a shower. If for any reason the dressing gets wet or is coming off, please call the office and we will bring you in to replace the dressing.

Driving: You are not to drive for at least 2 weeks post operatively. You are not to 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 should 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.

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 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.

Forms: If you have FMLA/work forms that need to be filled out, 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.