



## Postoperative Instructions for HAND CARE

1. **To avoid the spread of contagious disease and infection, wash your hands frequently especially before incision care, and avoid ill visitors.**
2. **Elevate** your hand above the level of your heart for 3 days to prevent swelling and pain. Elevate the involved extremity on pillows at night. If you have a sling on to help with elevation and comfort, discontinue when desired.
3. **Ice** the area of surgery 1 hour 4-5 times per day for the first 1-2 days. **If ice too cold**, ice 30 minutes at a time.
4. **Dressing:** if too tight, loosen the top wrap, ice and elevate-observe for evidence of swelling or discoloration. If this does not relieve the pressure — call us or the Bone and Joint Center.
  - Do not remove dressing until appointment— keep clean and dry. Shower with a plastic bag over your dressing. If the dressing becomes wet, dry with a hair dryer. Bloody drainage on the dressing is normal; however, if it continues to increase after elevation & ice — please call.
  - Keep dressing on, clean and dry until \_\_\_\_\_. Take dressing off, cover with plastic, shower. After shower cover incision(s) with band-aid & change daily; keep incisions clean and dry. **Do not** use any ointments on incisions.
5. **Exercise:** Move your freed fingers, elbow, and shoulder throughout the day to prevent stiffness. Please refer to “Terri’s Routine” handout. Start tomorrow, as tolerated.
6. **Pain medication** \_\_\_\_\_  
Take it with food to avoid upset stomach. \*For uncontrolled pain or reaction, call your doctor’s office. Resume your home meds. You may take ibuprofen/ Advil/ Aleve as needed if okay with your regular doctor. Question any side effects or drug interactions with your pharmacist.
7. Return **appointment @** Bone & Joint Center: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Call the Bone and Joint Center for any **signs of wound infection**: increased swelling, pain, warm to touch, redness, drainage, fever (temperature greater than 100.5).
9. If you have any questions or problems, please call your doctor. **After hours call PrimeCare Operator**, 1-701-530-5588 and have the on-call Bone and Joint physician paged for you.

**Bone and Joint Center**  
310 North 9th Street  
Bismarck, ND 58501  
(701) 530-8800  
1 -800-424-2663 (ND)  
1-800-443-2663 (SD & MT)  
Call 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

**Bismarck Surgical Associates**  
600 North 9th Street  
Bismarck, ND 58501  
(701) 221-2299  
1-877-918-9664 (Toll free)  
Call 7:00 am to 5:00 pm

### Other Instructions \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patient/ significant other

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RN signature

05/13