

Andrew J. Pastor, M.D.

## Open Reduction Internal Fixation Elbow Post Op Instructions

**Activity level-** You will be in a dressing and sling until your first post-operative appointment (7-10 days). The more you are able to allow your body to rest initially, the better and faster your recovery. Sleeping may be difficult the first few days after surgery and comfortable positioning is important. Sleeping in a slightly inclined position with the elbow higher than the heart is usually most comfortable and can be done best with pillows propping up the elbow.

**Precautions/activities to avoid-** No lifting anything heavier than a coffee cup for six weeks.

**Sling-** The sling you may be in is for comfort and to support the weight of your arm. You may come out of the sling and do pendulum exercises to keep your shoulder supple. The sling may be discontinued whenever it isn't helpful. Desktop level activities such as typing are permitted as tolerated.

**Dressings-** The dressings will be removed at your first postoperative appointment. If you wish to shower, do so while wearing a Cast Cover (found at a pharmacy) until your first post-op appointment. Do not apply any special ointments or creams to the incision until the skin is completely healed which is typically 3 weeks after surgery.

**Home exercises-** Rest is most important the first couple of days after surgery. After the dressing is removed, you should bend and extend the elbow as well as pointing your open hand to the ceiling and floor with the elbow at your side and bent at 90 degrees.

**Physical therapy-** Physical therapy may be prescribed when you return for postoperative visit. This will consist of a home exercise program and

possibly formal sessions with a therapist.

**Return to work-** You may return to work depending upon your job description as early as 3 to 4 days after your surgery. You will need to be off all narcotic pain medication for your brain to function normally. Jobs that have more physical requirements may require longer time away. Driving requires being off all narcotic pain medication.

**Report any of the following symptoms immediately: Fever greater than 101° F, calf pain, pain not controlled by pain medications, redness swelling specific to the incision site, excessive bleeding, problems with pain medication, numbness and tingling of the arm that was operated on.** You may call our office and speak with a member of our office staff at (425) 412-1875.

**Follow up-** Follow up with Dr. Pastor will be at two weeks following surgery. This appointment should have been pre-arranged prior to surgery.

You will follow up again at 6 and 12 weeks after surgery.

Thank you! I appreciate the opportunity to participate in your care.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Andrew J. Pastor', with a stylized, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Andrew J. Pastor, M.D.  
[www.AndrewPastorMD.com](http://www.AndrewPastorMD.com)

based on protocols established by Winston J. Warne, M.D. - Chief of Shoulder surgery at the University of Washington Medical Center