

## Dr. Garber's Discharge Instructions: **UPPER EXTREMITY**



**After Anesthesia:** Rest today, it is not unusual to feel sleepy or tired for a day or so after your surgery. No strenuous activity. You may feel a sore or "scratchy" throat after general anesthesia. This will go away in a day or two. A low-grade fever is common after any surgery with general anesthesia and is rarely due to infection. Resume taking prescription medication, unless your doctor instructs you otherwise. Resume eating normally. Start with gentle, soft foods; avoid greasy or spicy foods which may cause nausea.



**Medical Equipment:**  Sling  None  \_\_\_\_\_  
Use the sling when in public and when sleeping for the first 2 WEEKS. Take off or loosen the sling several times a day so you can move your elbow, wrist and hand. If it's comfortable, you can also let your shoulder swing gently.



**Dressing and Wound Care:** DO NOT apply any ointments or hydrogen peroxide to incision. Avoid sun exposure to the incision/scar for 6 months after surgery to reduce the appearance of the scar.

- Okay to remove large white bandage from your shoulder 2-3 days after surgery. Use a clean, damp washcloth to remove any blood and orange surgical prep that remains on your shoulder, arm and hand. After cleaning, place regular Band-Aids to cover the black stitches.
- Open Long Head Biceps Tendon Transplant:** Leave the additional silver-gray bandage on your upper arm until you are seen in the office. You will have an additional silver-gray bandage on your upper arm. If this dressing becomes soiled it can be removed. No new dressing is necessary because there is a surgical glue over your incision. Leave this glue in place until it falls off on its own.



**Showering:** For the first 1-2 weeks put a plastic bag/saran wrap over your incision/dressing when showering to keep it dry. After your stitches/staples are removed at a follow up appointment you can begin to shower normally. No pools, hot tubs, or ocean for a few weeks after surgery and your wounds are completely healed, and your doctor tells you it is okay.



**Activity:** Your surgeon will give you specific instructions on when it is okay for you to resume various movements, activities, work, sports, etc. Hand stiffness is common. Start moving your fingers right away after surgery. Your goal is to make a full fist and be able to straighten your fingers completely. Swelling in the arm and hand is also common.

**Elevate:** Your hand above your heart for the first few days after surgery to reduce swelling.



**Pain:** Numbness is common and may take several days to resolve depending on the type of block/anesthesia you had. Pain is expected after surgery. Don't wait until your pain is severe before taking pain medicine. Follow instructions on the label and use as directed. Prescription opioid pain medication will not completely 'take away that pain' but it can make it more tolerable. It can cause the following side effects: nausea, constipation, itchiness and skin redness. These side effects are not allergies, but are expected side effects that occur with all opioid pain medications.



**DO NOT** drink alcohol or use marijuana when taking prescribed opioid pain medications.  
**DO NOT** drive until you are OFF prescription opioid pain medications.

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**Nausea / Constipation:** Anesthesia and pain medications can cause nausea and/or constipation. Take prescription pain medicine with food to reduce nausea. You may be given a prescription for ondansetron (Zofran) to take for nausea, if needed. If you develop constipation, try to discontinue opioid medications (e.g. Tramadol, Oxycodone, Percocet, etc.) as able and take over the counter stool softeners (e.g. Senna, Dulcolax, Miralax, etc.) with plenty of fluids and high fiber foods.



**Sleep:** Difficulty sleeping is very common. Most people prefer to sleep in an upright reclined position (recliner, wedge pillow, or stack of normal pillows). You may a pillow behind the elbow of the sling. However, this is NOT required. Any position that allows you to sleep is okay.



**Ice:** Can help reduce pain and swelling. Apply a light towel over your incisions to keep the area dry and avoid skin burns. Apply ice for 15-20 minutes at a time every 2 hours while awake



**Itching / Rash:** If you develop MILD itching or rash, take over-the-counter allergy medicine such as Benadryl, Claritin, or Allerest. If you have a SEVERE reaction or have any difficulty breathing, call 911 or immediately go to the nearest emergency facility.



### Call the Doctor's Office if you have any of the following:

- Fever is above 101.5°F and/or chills.
- Nausea or throwing up to where you can't keep food/ liquids/ medication down.
- Unable to pee or "shi-shi" for 24 hours.
- A lot of pain, even with medication.
- A lot of swelling around the surgery site, persistent numbness, dark or pale color in fingers.
- Pus type drainage, or excessive bleeding through the dressing.
- Leg/calf pain, swelling, redness or tenderness.



**Dr. Garber's Office @ 808-548-7033** Monday-Friday 8am-5pm

After office hours call the 24/7 Physicians Exchange hotline @ 808-524-2575



If you need IMMEDIATE ATTENTION (such as difficulty breathing)

**Call 911 or go to the NEAREST EMERGENCY ROOM**

**Follow Up:** A nurse from MIS Hawaii will be giving you a post-operative follow-up call within a few days. If you have additional questions, please call your doctor listed above.



Your follow up appointment is scheduled for:

**As scheduled, if you have not made one, please call 548-7033**



The discharge instructions were explained to me and I have received a copy of these instructions. I understand these instructions are necessary for continuing medical care after I (the patient) leave MIS Hawaii.

Patient or Authorized Person Signature

Nurse Signature

Date/Time