



POSTOP CARE
AFTER

***CARPAL TUNNEL
SURGERY***

Lali Sekhon, MD, PhD, FACS

T 775.657.8844
F 775.657.9881

<http://www.nevadaneurosurgery.com>

THE DAY OF SURGERY

- **Keep the arm elevated** as best you can for the first week. This will help remove some of the discomfort you will have from swelling as it allows it to drain away.
- Take Tylenol (#1, 2 or 3) or Vicodin for the for pain
- **Keep moving the fingers**

THE DAY AFTER SURGERY

- The big bandage wrapped around the hand can be removed. Let the wound get some air

THE WEEK AFTER SURGERY

- **Keep the incision dry –shower with your hand in a glove or plastic bag**
- **A bandaid is ok**
- **Don't soil the wound**
- As long as the dressing remains dry and does not get soiled it can be changed every 2nd day for 7 days then no dressing are needed
- **Keep the wound clean and dry**
- Do not rub any creams or lotions onto the wound
- With time all the stiffness will disappear and this is usually over 6 weeks to 3 months.

10-14 DAYS AFTER SURGERY

- **The sutures are usually removed between 10 days postoperatively. Make sure you have a follow-up appointment**

OTHER ISSUES

- The scar will remain pink for some time and will gradually fade to a fine white line.
- Return to work will be discussed with you preoperatively and will depend on the occupation that you have
- Do not drive if possible for 2-3 weeks after surgery
- Most patients do not need any hand physical therapy unless there is some persisting ache in the wrist

- It is important to use the hand after the first few days as this helps reduce long term stiffness developing
- Do not lift anything heavy until instructed by your doctor and this is usually not until about 2-3 months after the surgery
- Don't take arthritis pills or aspirin for 10 days after surgery
- After 1 month you can rub Vitamin E cream onto the incision to soften the scar
- Hand physical therapy can be commenced 1 month after surgery
- **Constipation on pain pills is common- take fiber or over the counter stool softeners/laxatives. Your pharmacist can guide you**

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO WATCH FOR?

If you develop any of the following symptoms it is important that you contact your surgeon or go to the ER immediately:

1. **Increasing pain in the wound/wrist.** It is common to have some pain and as you use the hand more some stiffness may develop, but if the pain is steadily increasing this may suggest a problem and it important to seek advice
2. **Fever.** This will suggest the possibility of infection and the doctor must be notified immediately
3. **Swelling or infection in the wound.** The wound will swell a little after the first day or so and the wound edges may appear raised. If the area around the wound starts to redden then this may suggest infection. It is normally a little pink but increasing redness means the possibility of infection.
4. **Increasing or new onset weakness or numbness in the hand or fingers.**