
Hand and Upper Extremity Clinic

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Trigger Finger Release Post Surgery Information and Care

Post-surgery for trigger finger release, the primary care includes keeping the incision clean and dry, elevating the hand to reduce swelling, and beginning gentle finger range-of-motion exercises immediately to prevent stiffness. You should follow your surgeon's specific instructions for dressing removal and showering, avoid soaking the hand or heavy lifting, and watch for signs of infection.

Immediate and short-term care

Rest:

Rest your hand when you feel tired. Avoid using it for heavy lifting (over 1-2 pounds) or repetitive motions like typing or chopping for the first 1 to 2 weeks.

Elevation:

Keep your hand elevated above your heart for the first 72 hours to help decrease swelling.

Ice:

Apply a cold compress or ice pack to the area for 10-20 minutes at a time to manage pain and swelling.

Exercises:

Start gentle, active range-of-motion exercises right away, such as bending and straightening your fingers, to help with swelling and stiffness. Follow your surgeon's specific instructions for these exercises.

Pain management:

Take prescribed pain and anti-inflammatory medications as directed.

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Follow instructions:

Follow your surgeon's specific instructions on when to remove the initial dressing and when to shower.

Keep clean and dry:

Keep the incision area clean and dry until the sutures are removed. When showering, protect it with a bandage or plastic wrap, and wash the area gently with soap and warm water after the initial dressing is off. Pat the area dry and use a new sterile bandage.

Avoid certain activities:

Do not soak the hand in water, use hot tubs, or swim until at least 24 hours after suture removal.

Follow-up appointment:

You will have a follow-up appointment, usually around 10 days after surgery, for suture removal and a wound check.

Driving:

You can typically start driving once your wound is healed and you can safely grip the steering wheel, which is usually after 3 to 5 days.

Work:

Return to work depends on the job. A desk job may allow you to return sooner, while a manual labor job will require more time off, possibly 4-6 weeks.

Full activity:

You should regain full finger range of motion within about 2 weeks, but it may take longer for the swelling to fully resolve. You can return to sports after about 2 to 3 weeks, once the wound is completely healed.

When to contact a doctor

Seek immediate medical attention if you experience fever (greater than 101° F / 38° C), new or different colored drainage from the incision, severe pain, chest pain, shortness of breath, or a rapid heartbeat