

# SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS

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## Distal Biceps Repair

### What to Expect

- The following instructions will help guide you through your recovery. Separate instructions for therapy and exercises will be given and are available at [www.VanThielMD.com](http://www.VanThielMD.com).
- Dr. Van Thiel's PA (Physician Assistant) Carly Jackson will be closely involved in your care and recovery. A physician assistant is a licensed practitioner that has completed over 2 years of post-college medical training and has the credentials and expertise to treat patients independently.
- **1<sup>st</sup> Post-Operative Visit** – This will be between 7-10 days after the surgery. You will see Dr. Van Thiel and he will go through your pictures from surgery and answer any questions you have.
- **2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Post-Operative Visits** – Occur at 6 weeks and 3 months after surgery. During these visits you will be seen by Carly Jackson (Dr. Van Thiel's PA) to ensure that you are comfortable and meeting the recovery goals. Ms. Jackson is always in direct communication with Dr. Van Thiel and does have the medical expertise, training and credentials to help you along with your recovery.
- **4<sup>th</sup> Post-Operative Visit** – Occurs at 6 months after surgery. Dr. Van Thiel will discuss any questions that you have and ensure you are making a complete recovery.
- **Physical Therapy** – Physical therapy can begin 7 days post-op and will be set up upon scheduling your surgery.
- We will contact your insurance company to authorize your surgery, but we suggest that you also contact your insurance company for further

information and to verify coverage.

### Day of Surgery

- **Diet** – Do not eat anything after midnight the day of surgery.
- When you get to the hospital or surgery center Dr. Van Thiel will come speak with you and confirm the procedure and the side. Feel free to ask any questions.
- The anesthesiologist will also come speak with you before your surgery.
- **After Surgery** – You will wake up in the recovery room and once you are comfortable and fully awake, the nurses will discharge you to go home.

### *Post-Operative Care*

#### Diet

- Following surgery, nausea is very common. Begin with clear liquids and progress to your daily diet as tolerated.

#### Wound Management

- A bandage and splint is applied to the operative arm. Keep this clean and dry. This will be removed at your first post-operative visit.
- It is normal for there to be drainage and for the dressing/ACE wrap to become blood tinged. If this occurs, reinforce with additional dressing.
- If showering, cover arm and splint with plastic bag/tape to keep dry. The splint will be removed at your first post-operative visit.

#### Activity

- Do NOT lift with operative arm or attempt to bend elbow
- The sling is applied for comfort. You may remove as needed.
- Physical therapy will begin after your first postoperative appointment.
- A brace will be applied at your first physical therapy appointment after surgery
- No driving until instructed by your physician.
- Sleeping may be performed in a reclining chair or bed with the use of pillows to support the operative site as tolerated.
- Generally, if you have a desk job you may return to work on the third post operative day.
- Return to a physically demanding job will be discussed on your postoperative visit.
- You are encouraged to walk in a controlled environment to avoid prolonged sitting.

### Ice/Cryotherapy

- Ice packs will be provided and applied at the conclusion of your surgery.
- Use continuously for the first 72 hours postoperatively, then in 30 minute increments 4-5 times per day thereafter as tolerated.

### Medications

- Most patients require the use of narcotics for a period of time after surgery. Take as directed.
- Common side effects of pain medication: nausea, insomnia, itching, constipation, drowsiness, hallucinations.
- Take medications with food to reduce side effects
- Do not operate machinery or moving vehicles while taking the pain medication.
- Ibuprofen, Motrin, Advil or Aleve may be taken

as directed in addition to the pain medication to control symptoms. If you were prescribed **Indomethacin (Indocin)** after surgery, take as directed for prescribed period of time. Do not take over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medications until this is finished.

### Emergencies

- If at any time you have questions or emergent concerns contact Dr. Van Thiel or his physician assistant Carly Jackson, PA-C at (815-398-9491).
- If you are calling after hours or over a weekend you will be directed to the physician answering service and you may be called by the physician or physician assistant on call.
- Please call if any of the following arise:
  - Fever >101. (It is normal to have a low grade fever for the first 1-2 days after surgery)
  - Redness
  - Painful swelling
  - Numbness
  - Shortness of breath
  - Excessive bleeding and/or drainage from incision sites
  - If you require immediate attention, go to the nearest emergency room

### Follow-up

- A follow-up appointment will be set for 7-10 days after the surgery. If you have questions or concerns about this date contact our scheduler at (815-381-7365) during normal office hours.
- Physical Therapy will begin after your first postoperative visit
- If you have additional questions or concerns most questions can be addressed by our Nursing staff (Jamie) by calling (815-381-7365).