

Post-Surgery Restrictions

Kelly Holtkamp, M.D.

Work Status

- Work status is determined by the injury or surgery performed.
- Your employer will determine if there is work available within the restrictions outlined. Your employer may decide temporary “off work” status if modified work duty is not available.
- In general, it is advised to remain off work for at least 24 hours following surgery.
- You should not return to work if you are taking narcotic pain medications. Your pain should gradually decrease and require less medication over time. As your pain decreases you should decrease the amount and frequency of your medication.
- It is acceptable to return to work while taking non-narcotic medication such as NSAIDs (i.e. ibuprofen, Aleve, Motrin).

Return to School

- You should not return to school if you are taking narcotic pain medications. Your pain should gradually decrease and require less medication over time. As your pain decreases you should decrease the amount and frequency of your medication.
- It is acceptable to return to school while taking non-narcotic medication such as NSAIDs (i.e. ibuprofen, Aleve, Motrin). The school nurse may require a doctor’s note.

Driving

- Absolutely NO driving while taking narcotic pain medications.
- Upper Extremity Splint BELOW the elbow (wrist cock-up, thumb spica splint):
 - The Illinois Secretary of State allows driving while wearing an upper extremity splint below the elbow. Please use good judgment as to whether you can safely grip the steering wheel to avoid a motor vehicle accident.
- Upper Extremity Splint ABOVE the elbow (Muenster, Long Arm Cast):
 - Driving while wearing an upper extremity splint above the elbow impairs your ability to drive. Therefore, driving is NOT recommended until the splint has been discontinued. Please use good judgment as to whether you can safely grip the steering wheel to avoid a motor vehicle accident.