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What to expect...

TRIGGER FINGER SURGERY

SURGERY DAY

- Please remember that you are not to eat or drink after midnight the night before your surgery. Medications that you need to take the morning of your surgery should be taken with a sip of water. Medications that can wait should be taken when you get home. If you are unsure, ask your doctor who prescribed the medication when it is safest to take.
- On your surgery day, it is a good idea to shower in the morning and avoid applying heavy perfumes, makeup and lotions. Please remove your jewelry and wear loose, comfortable clothing.
- You will need transportation with a friend or family member to and from the surgery center.

- Trigger finger release surgery is performed as an outpatient procedure in an ambulatory surgery center. Your doctors will discuss with you the anesthesia that is used but most commonly, it is “conscious sedation” with medications that alleviate pain and make you sleepy. Your doctor will also use a local anesthesia in your hand that will numb the hand.
- At the surgery center, you will be taken to a pre-operative area where you will change into a gown and speak with nurses and the anesthesia team. You will have an IV placed in the arm opposite from your surgery.
- Your hand surgeon will also come in to speak with you about your procedure. You will review the plan and consent. Your doctor will answer any last minute questions or concerns at that time.

- The procedure itself is performed in less than 30 minutes and you can expect to wake up in a recovery area. Many patients will notice improvement in their previous symptoms as soon as they are in recovery. Some patients will have a slower recovery from symptoms and this can take weeks to months. You will have a light bandage on your wrist and hand when you leave the surgery center.
- Pain medication is typically called into your pharmacy before your procedure. If you have not already picked up the prescription, please do so on your way home. If you prefer not to use the pain medication, plan to use over the counter medications such as Tylenol (acetaminophen) or Advil (ibuprofen).

- When you arrive home after surgery, please make an effort to bend and straighten your fingers. Your fingers may feel swollen and moving them will help to disperse the swelling. We suggest sitting upright with your fingers pointing up to the ceiling (like asking a question in class). Resting on the day of your surgery is important to help decrease swelling and pain. Using ice on your hand, or placed at the inside of your elbow may help with swelling.
- You may eat and drink when you get home but plan to take it easy that day.
- Your bandage should remain in place until your post operative appointment. If there is a problem with your bandage, please call the office for help.
- You will likely feel discomfort in your hand and at the finger incision. This is normal and should improve with time. Your fingers may appear bruised when you get home or in the days after your surgery. Some bruising is normal. You can check circulation by feeling for warmth in your fingers and seeing if your nail beds are pink.

AFTER SURGERY

(until your post op appointment)

- In the days after your surgery, you may continue to have intermittent swelling, discomfort and a feeling of stiffness. Please sit down, elevate your fingers and work on finger flexion and extension.
- You may use this hand for light tasks around the house as long as there is not an increase in pain or swelling. This includes personal care, light activity and computer use.
- You may still feel a clicking sensation. This is usually temporary and will resolve with time. Many patients feel immediate relief of symptoms, but others can take weeks to months to improve.
- You should call the office if you have worsening symptoms, increased pain or if there is a problem with your bandage.

- Work status: depending on the type of work you perform, you may feel ready to return to work before your post operative appointment. As long as you can limit heavy use of this hand and you can keep your bandage clean and dry, you may work.
- If your employer requires documentation for your work status, including a return to work date and/or restrictions, please call for a release.
- If you do not plan on working until your post operative appointment, you should ask for the documentation and restrictions at that appointment.

# POST OPERATIVE APPOINTMENT

- At the post operative appointment, we will remove your bandage and assess your wound.
- If there are external stitches, these will be removed at this appointment.
- We will review the recommendations for your wound care and recovery.
- Most patients will attend therapy after trigger finger surgery for work on range of motion and scar rehab. Some patients prefer to rehab the hand at home and we will provide instruction. If you struggle at home, please call for a therapy referral. It is possible that your finger will be stiff after surgery which can be permanent; therapy decreases this long term risk.
- Work status will be reviewed at this appointment.

- As you continue to recover over the weeks and months after trigger finger release surgery, please keep in mind the following information.
- Healing time for each surgery is highly variable and can take months to improve. Adhering to the instructions from your providers is essential in your recovery. Continue to perform exercises and careful monitoring of your symptoms.
- Many patients will experience a period of time after their surgery that feels frustrating due to scar tissue, swelling and stiffness in the hand. Diligent work on aggressive scar massage and finger stretching and range of motion exercises is essential for your full recovery. If you are struggling with performing these exercises on your own at home, please contact us for a referral to physical therapy.

315-251-3162

Please call the office with any  
problems or questions.

