



## POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS: THUMB ARTHROPLASTY SURGERY

### DRESSINGS

- Do not remove the plaster portion splint or get it wet.
- Do not remove skin tapes (butterfly tapes) for 2-3 weeks from your surgery or until they fall off.
- Do not wear carpal tunnel splints after surgery.
- Loosen and rewrap the outer dressing if it is too tight.
- You may keep your arm in a sling for comfort, but you can remove this as needed to move your elbow and shoulder.

### MEDICATION

- Pain meds should be taken with food to avoid stomach upset. Do not drive if taking pain meds.
- For patients with normal kidney function, we recommend taking 1000mg of Tylenol every 8 hours and 600mg of ibuprofen every 6 hours for 3 days post-op.
- Do not take vitamin E, fish oil, or garlic pills for 2 weeks after surgery.

### ACTIVITY

- Keep hand elevated above heart for one week after surgery. You may continue to elevate your hand after one week if you experience additional swelling.
- Please begin to move around as tolerated. During waking hours, walk around every 2-3 hours to help prevent blood clots for the first 2-3 days after your surgery.
- No lifting more than 2 lbs with the affected hand after surgery for at least 6 weeks.
- It is okay to move your fingers. **DO NOT MOVE YOUR THUMB.**

### RECOVERY

- Apply ice as needed for comfort, 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off unless directed otherwise by Dr. Bartholomew.
- Moderate discomfort, swelling, and some numbness may persist after surgery but should improve over the first week post-op.

### FOLLOW-UP

- Attend your scheduled post-operative visits.
- You will also have hand therapy appointments, which may be before your first follow-up with Dr. Bartholomew. It is imperative to your recovery that you attend these appointments.

**CALL OUR OFFICE if you get a fever of over 100°F or if your incision becomes red or hot to the touch.**