



GIVING LIFE TO POSSIBLE



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### **GENERAL POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR ELBOW SURGERY PATIENTS**

The following information is general for all elbow surgeries and may differ from your exact procedure.

#### **• WOUND CARE & HYGIENE**

##### **General Elbow Scopes (Requiring Only Small Portal Incisions)**

Elbow arthroscopies generally only require very small portal incisions to be made. Dr. Shybut usually allows you to remove the bulky dressing 48 hours after your surgery.

If you choose to remove your outer surgical dressing, please follow these guidelines. Remove the outer elastic bandages along with the white gauze pads and white surgical padding. Bleeding usually occurs following surgery so these dressings may be soiled with blood. Only remove the elastic bandage and any white gauze pads or white surgical padding. Do NOT remove either the steri-strips that are directly on the skin or the yellow medicated gauze immediately on top of the steri-strips if at all possible. You are allowed to place water-proof bandages over the portal incisions to shower. Be sure to cover the entire area with water-proof bandages including the steri-strips and yellow gauze. Once you place water-proof bandages over your portals, leave these on until your first post-op appointment since removing these will remove the steri-strips and yellow gauze.

##### **Open Procedures (Requiring Larger Incisions)**

If you are having any type of procedure that requires a larger incision such as an Ulnar Collateral Ligament Reconstruction (Tommy John surgery), Dr. Shybut does NOT allow you to remove your dressings after surgery. This includes you the patient, your caregivers, or the physical therapist. An exposed wound in physical therapy is UNACCEPTABLE. Removing your surgical dressings will expose you to potentially serious infections.

Dressings will be changed on your first post-op visit and a new dressing applied. If your dressing gets EXCESSIVELY wet prior to your first post-op visit, meaning “soaked through,” please contact the office for instructions.

#### **• POST-OPERATIVE SPLINT – (IF APPLICABLE)**

A post-operative splint may be necessary depending upon the specific procedure you will be having. This splint allows for limited to no movement of the elbow in order to protect from unwanted motions following surgery. If a post-operative splint is ordered after surgery, Dr. Shybut will discuss its use.

#### **• POST-OPERATIVE SLING – (IF APPLICABLE)**

A post-operative brace with or without attached padded pillow may be necessary depending upon the specific procedure you will be having. This sling allows for limited to no movement of

**Baylor**  
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the elbow in order to protect from unwanted motions following surgery. If a post-operative sling or immobilizer is ordered after surgery, Dr. Shybut will discuss its use.