

**Dr. Lackey's
Hand Surgery
Post-Operative Instructions**

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ATX Hand Surgery*

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Condition treated: _____

Procedure performed: _____

Follow-up appointment: _____

Special instructions (See following pages for general instructions): _____

Contact for Issues:

- **During Business Hours:** Call (512) 436-9986 to speak with Dr. Lackey's team.
- **After Hours:** If urgent, call the office at (512) 436-9986 to speak with the on-call provider.
- **Emergencies:** For life-threatening situations, call 911 immediately.

Urgent Concerns: Contact us if you experience severe or uncontrolled pain, signs of infection (fever, redness, swelling, or drainage), excessive bleeding, or any unexpected complications.

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Surgery is only part of the equation when obtaining an excellent result. The recovery phase is just as important. Please follow the instructions below except as indicated above.

Wound Care and Showering

- **Rigid Splint:** If you are wearing a rigid splint, do not remove it until your follow-up visit. You may shower, but cover the splint with a waterproof plastic bag or shower cover to keep it dry. You may remove your brace or sling to shower unless otherwise instructed.
- **Soft Bandage:** If you have a soft bandage, remove it after 3 days but leave the Steri-strips (white stickers) over the incisions. These strips may naturally fall off, which is normal. Once removed, cover the incision with waterproof bandages to protect it. You may shower after removing the bandage (3 days after surgery). Pat the wound dry after showering and place a clean, waterproof Band-Aid over the incision.
- **General Care:** Avoid applying ointments, creams, alcohol, or hydrogen peroxide to the incision area. Keep the wound clean and dry. Do not soak the site in baths, pools, or other water sources until cleared by Dr. Lackey.
- **If Dressings Fail:** If your dressings become wet, too tight, or fall off, contact the office immediately for guidance or visit urgent care if needed.

Elevation and Sleeping

- Keep your hand elevated above heart level as much as possible to reduce swelling and pain. Use pillows or the provided Carter pillow for proper positioning.
- Avoid using a sling unless instructed, as it may increase swelling and stiffness.
- Elevation is particularly important while sleeping. Arrange pillows or use the Carter pillow to maintain proper positioning overnight.

Ice

- Apply ice to the affected area for 30 minutes at a time, 3-4 times daily. This helps control inflammation and pain. Always place a thin barrier (e.g., towel or sheet) between the ice and your skin to prevent frostbite.
- If a rigid splint is in place, position the ice at the edges of the splint or over it to maximize benefit.
- Consistent icing during the first two weeks greatly reduces swelling, pain, and overall inflammation.

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Activity

- Avoid heavy lifting, pushing, pulling, or weight-bearing activities with the operated arm until cleared by Dr. Lackey.
- No sports or strenuous activities until cleared by Dr. Lackey.
- Engage in light walking every hour while awake to encourage circulation and prevent stiffness, but avoid overexertion. If you feel dizzy, stop and rest.

Home Exercises and Therapy

- Perform specific home exercises provided by Dr. Lackey to maintain mobility and prevent stiffness. If no specific exercises are prescribed, and your fingers are not in a rigid splint, perform the "Six Pack Exercises" 10 times per hour (attached at the end of the packet).
- Attend physical or occupational therapy if prescribed. Therapy is a key component of recovery and will help restore function.

Driving and Travel

- Do not drive until you are no longer taking narcotic pain medications and are free from splints or slings.
- When ready to resume driving, practice in an empty parking lot to regain confidence before driving in traffic.
- Dr. Lackey does not clear to return to driving. Ultimately, it is your decision to decide when you feel safe.
- Avoid flights or long trips for two weeks after surgery to minimize complications. Discuss any travel plans with Dr. Lackey.

Medication Guidelines

- **Pain Medicine:** Take narcotics (oxycodone or hydrocodone) only as needed to manage severe pain. Do not take additional Tylenol (acetaminophen) if the product already contains Tylenol (acetaminophen). Common side effects include drowsiness, nausea, and constipation. Use over-the-counter stool softeners like Colace or Senna to prevent constipation. Avoid driving or operating machinery while on narcotics. Refills are only provided on a case-by-case basis, given the rising opioid epidemic in the United States.

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- **Anti-inflammatory (NSAID) medicine (Naproxen, ibuprofen, Celebrex):** These reduce pain and inflammation. Take with food to prevent stomach upset. Do not use NSAIDs if you have a history of ulcers without prior approval from your doctor. Take only one NSAID at a time. See the attached pain medication schedule for dosing instructions.
- **Other pain medications:** If you were prescribed other pain medications (gabapentin, Robaxin, etc.) please take them as instructed until your first post-operative visit.
- **Antibiotics:** If prescribed, take the full course as directed to prevent infection.
- **DVT prophylaxis (Blood thinners):** In some cases, your personal risk profile and/or the type of surgery you have undergone makes it necessary to take a blood thinner to help prevent blood clots.
- **Stool softener (Colace, Senna):** These are available over-the-counter at your local pharmacy and should be taken while you are taking narcotic pain medication to avoid constipation. You should stop taking these medications if you develop diarrhea.

Anesthesia

- If you received a nerve block before or after surgery to help with post-operative pain control, you may have numbness or inability to move the limb. This may last 8-36 hours, depending on the amount and type of medication the anesthesiologist uses.
- If you are experiencing numbness after 36 hours, please call the office.
- When the nerve block wears off, you will feel a tingling sensation. You should start taking the pain medication at that time to ensure that you stay ahead of the pain.

Diet

- Start with clear liquids (water, juice, Gatorade) and light foods (Jello, soup, crackers). Progress to a normal diet as tolerated if you are not nauseated.
- Avoid greasy or spicy foods for the first 24 hours to avoid GI upset.
- Drink plenty of fluids after surgery.

Returning to Work or School

- Typically, you may return to seated work or school 3-7 days after surgery if you are no longer requiring narcotic pain medication during work/school hours.
- In conjunction with your input, Dr. Lackey will determine when you may return to more physically rigorous demands. Please let us know if you require a note for work/school.

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What to Expect After Surgery

- **Pain:** Moderate pain is normal and manageable with medication, ice, and rest.
- **Warmth and Redness:** Mild warmth or redness around the incision is expected for up to three weeks. If redness worsens or spreads, contact the office.
- **Drainage:** Some drainage is normal for the first 48-72 hours. If it continues or worsens, call the office.
- **Bruising and Numbness:** These are common and will resolve with time. Bruising may appear to spread due to gravity.
- **Low-Grade Fever:** Temperatures below 101.5°F are normal. Rest, hydrate, and breathe deeply. Contact us if your fever exceeds 101.5°F.

Notify Us

- Cold or blue fingers, severe or worsening pain, significant drainage, or signs of infection.
- Cardiovascular symptoms like chest pain or shortness of breath.
- Blood clot symptoms, including calf pain, swelling, or redness.
- Severe nausea, vomiting, or urinary retention after surgery.

Follow Up Appointment

Follow-Up: Schedule your first post-op visit 10-14 days after surgery. You will be contacted to arrange this, but if you don't hear from us within 3 business days, call to confirm your appointment.

Office Contact Information:

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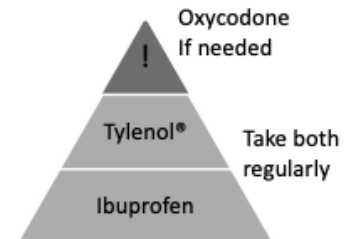
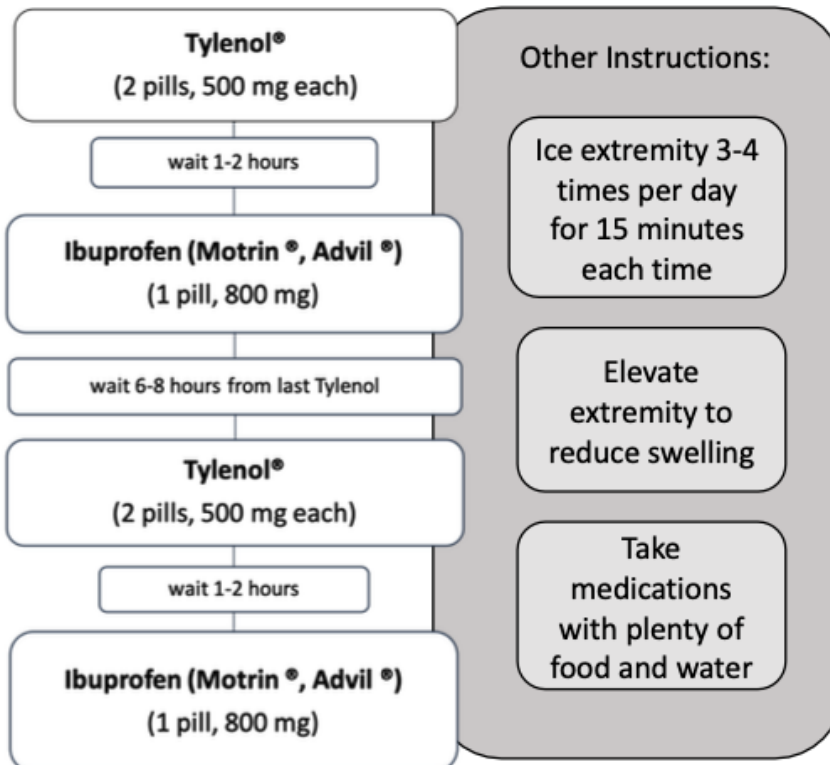


Postoperative Pain Medication Schedule

To best control your pain, please take Tylenol and Ibuprofen every 6-8 hours.

Make sure to wait 1-2 hours between Tylenol and Ibuprofen

Oxycodone is to be used when pain is not adequately controlled by the schedule below:



WARNING Oxycodone

Side effects include:

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Constipation
- Headache
- Legal impairment
- Risk of Addiction

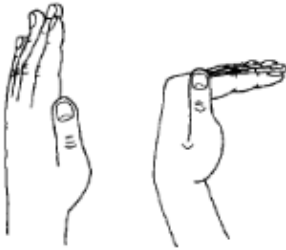
If your pain is not relieved by the protocol shown at the left, consider taking at **any time:**

Oxycodone
(1/2 – 2 pills every 4-6 hours)

Recommend to start with ½ pill and only take more if needed

Unused Oxycodone pills should be properly disposed of
Find a local dropbox at:
www.awarerx.pharmacy

"Six Pack" Hand Exercises



- 1) **Imaginary Tabletop.** Make a tabletop with your fingers by keeping your wrists and your fingers straight. Bend only at the knuckles.



- 2) **Knuckle Bend.** Keep your knuckles and wrist straight. Bend and straighten your fingers.



- 3) **Make a Fist.** Make a fist, being sure each joint is bending as much as possible.

- 4) Straighten your fingers as much as possible



- 5) **Make "O's".** Make an "O" by touching your thumb to your fingertips, one at a time. Open your hand wide after touching each finger.



- 6) **Table Spread.** Rest your hand on the table with the palm down. Spread your fingers wide apart and bring them together again.