



# About the Hand Center

**Welcome to the Hand Center at University of Washington Medical Center (UWMC).**

**We are happy you have chosen us to participate in your health care.**

**The care guidelines in this handout will help us provide the best care for you.**

## **After Your Diagnostic Test**

***(MRI, EMG/NCS, Bone Scan, etc.)***

Please wait 2 to 3 days after your test before calling the Hand Center. Your results may not be available right away, and our providers will need time to review the results and determine the best plan for your care.

## **Scheduling Your Elective Surgery**

Our surgery schedulers will call you 7 to 10 work days after your clinic visit to schedule your elective surgery. If you have questions regarding your surgery, the best days to call are Thursday and Friday.

## **Occupational/Physical Therapy**

If you were given a prescription to see an Occupational or Physical Therapist after your clinic visit but were unable to wait, please call the Exercise Training Center at 206-598-2888 to make an appointment.

## **Insurance Forms**

If you were given insurance forms, our staff will work with you to process them. Please allow plenty of time. It may take us up to 2 weeks to complete the forms and return them to you.

## **Pain Medicine**

### ***Before Surgery***

We realize many of our patients are in pain before elective surgery. We encourage the use of over-the-counter pain medicines as needed. If prescription medicine is needed, we ask that your primary care provider manage this before surgery.

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*a passion for life*

## Questions?

Call 206-598-4263

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC clinic staff is also available to help at any time.

Hand Center:  
206-598-4263

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### *After Surgery*

The Hand Center will manage all post-operative pain medicines for up to 3 months after surgery. After surgery, call us at 206-598-4263 to speak with the nurse about your medicine refill. Please note that it may take up to 48 hours to refill your prescription, and many pain medicines cannot be called or faxed to pharmacies due to drug laws. Please plan for this.

### **Return to Work**

It is the responsibility of your primary care provider to arrange for any time off that may be needed before surgery. In most cases, it is expected that you will return to work within 2 weeks to 3 months after your surgery, based on your injury and recovery. Your surgeon will help with return-to-work paperwork after your surgery.

### **Care for Your Cast**

- Please keep your cast dry. While showering, bathing, or in wet weather, keep your cast covered with a plastic bag. If the padding beneath the cast becomes wet, the skin may be irritated and sores may develop. If this happens, call the Hand Center to make an appointment to have your cast changed.
- The skin under the cast may itch. **DO NOT** push anything inside your cast to scratch. It may wrinkle the padding, irritate your skin, or you could lose part of your scratcher under the cast. This can cause a sore or start a serious infection.
- If your arm starts to swell, lie down and place your arm above your heart. If the swelling does not ease and your hand is becoming cold and bluish, call the Hand Center right away for a casting appointment.

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