



After Your De Quervain's Release Surgery

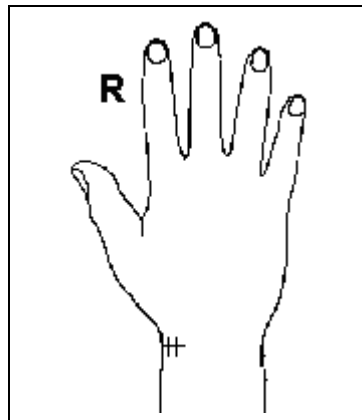
Self-care and follow-up

This handout explains follow-up care after surgery to ease a form of tendonitis called De Quervain's disease.

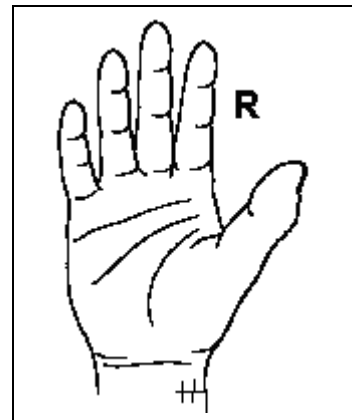
If your incision is red or there is drainage coming from it, call us right away at the phone numbers listed on the next page. Go to the emergency room if this occurs at night or on a weekend.

Wound Care

- After surgery, you will wear a splint that supports your thumb and wrist. The splint helps protect the incision site and lessens swelling. It will stay on until your follow-up visit with the doctor 10 to 14 days after surgery.
- When bathing, cover the splint and your hand with a plastic bag to keep them dry.
- Elevate your hand as much as possible to lessen swelling and pain.



The incision site on the back of a right hand.



The incision site on the front of a right hand.

Pain Management

- You will receive a prescription for narcotic pain medicine. Take this medicine only if you need it.
- Be sure to talk with the clinic nurse about how to take your pain medicine. To best manage your pain, you must take your pain medicine the way it was prescribed. Taking the correct dose at the right time is very important.

Questions or Concerns?

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

Weekdays, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.: Call the Hand Center at **206-598-4263**.

After office hours and on weekends and holidays: Call the hospital operator at **206-598-6190**. Ask for the Hand Fellow on call to be paged. Your call will be returned.

For more information, please visit the Hand Center online at www.uwhand.com.

- If you have uncomfortable side effects from the pain medicine, call the nurse at 206-598-4263.
- Please see “Medications After Surgery” for more instructions.

Driving

- Do **not** drive if you are taking narcotic pain medicine. It is not safe. The medicine can make you sleepy and delay your reaction time.
- Once you are no longer taking the medicine, you may drive as soon as you can comfortably grip the steering wheel with both hands.

Activity

- You can use your hand for daily tasks such as getting dressed, typing, combing your hair, preparing food, and other light activities.
- Do **not** lift anything heavier than a full soda can (about 1 pound or .45 kilogram) until your sutures have been removed.
- Avoid any heavy lifting, such as weight lifting or carrying your groceries, until 4 weeks after surgery.

Follow-up

When you leave the surgery center, you should have a follow-up appointment in the Hand Center already set for 10 to 14 days after surgery. At this visit:

- Your sutures will be removed.
- We will remove the post-operative splint and place you into a splint that can be taken off if needed.
- You will be referred to a hand therapist who will assess your progress. The therapist will also teach you exercises to lessen the scarring around the incision and increase your hand's strength and range of motion.

Wear the splint for heavier activities for about 3 more weeks after your sutures are removed. You can increase your activities as tolerated, but try to avoid heavy repetitive activities until 4 weeks after surgery.

Results

Most patients who have De Quervain's release surgery regain full use of their hand, with full motion and full return of strength within about 4 to 6 weeks of surgery.

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