

# Patient Education

Hand Center/Bone and Joint Center



## After Your Mucous Cyst Excision Surgery

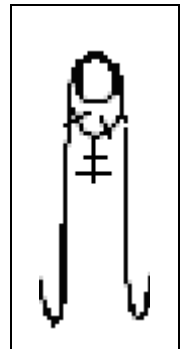
*Self-care and follow-up*

This handout explains follow-up care after surgery to remove a mucous cyst.

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, your finger will be placed in a bulky *dressing* (bandage). This helps protect the incision site and lessens swelling.
- You will visit the hand therapist 2 or 3 days after surgery. At that time, your finger will be placed into a smaller splint that protects your fingertip and the metal pin sticking out. This metal pin was shot through the tip of your finger during surgery to stabilize the *distal interphalangeal* (DIP) joint.
- Do **not** put any ointment or lotion on your wound.
- Keep the wound dry for 4 days by covering your hand with a plastic bag when you shower. After 4 days, you may shower without covering the incision, but do **not** soak your hand in a bathtub, hot tub, kitchen sink, swimming pool, etc.
- Your wrist and palm may swell. Use an ice pack for up to 20 minutes at a time over the surgical site to help ease swelling. Be sure to place a thin cloth between your skin and the ice pack to protect your skin.
- Elevate your hand as much as possible to lessen swelling and pain.



The incision site on a finger.

### 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](http://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 light daily activities such as driving, getting dressed, typing, etc.
- You may do light aerobic exercises as soon as 1 or 2 days after surgery. Avoid any heavy lifting, such as weight lifting, until 4 weeks after surgery.

### Follow-up

- You will visit the hand therapist 2 or 3 days after your surgery. At this visit, your wound dressing will be removed and a small removable splint will be made.
- 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. Your sutures will be removed at this visit.
- After your sutures are removed, you can increase your activities as tolerated. But, try to avoid heavy repetitive activities such as hammering until 4 weeks after surgery.
- During the surgery, a small pin may be placed in your finger. This pin acts as an internal splint. It will be removed in the clinic at your follow-up visit 10 to 14 days after surgery.

### Results

Most patients who have surgery to remove a mucous cyst regain full use of their hand with full return of motion and strength.

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