

Home Care Instructions

Most masses of the extremities are benign, and the surgery involves routine excision. We will follow the pathology closely if indicated. Most of the below post-op protocol is aimed at a good cosmetic result.

-Dr. Michael C. Russonella

- Diet** Resume your normal diet as tolerated.
- Activity** Go home and rest today. If you received general anesthesia, you may feel tired and drowsy. Therefore, you should not drive a car, operate machinery, drink alcoholic beverages, or make any legal decisions for 24 hours. If you received a local anesthetic or block, you may feel numbness that should gradually wear off. Unless otherwise instructed, you are weight-bearing as tolerated for the first week. Some operative sensitivity is normal after any upper extremity surgery; this most commonly presents as sensitive to temperature extremes or pain with extremes of motion.
- Pain Medication** You have been prescribed Vitamin C. Although this is a common vitamin supplement, its use perioperatively has been suggested to decrease the development of Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy, a possible pain syndrome. Although this is more common with fractures than tissue masses, I prefer patients to take it any time significant nerve mobilization might be involved. Please take as prescribed. Resume all medications as regularly prescribed unless specifically prohibited by myself or your primary care doctor in the post-op period. The first 24-48 hours after surgery are the worst in terms of pain: use pain medication as needed. You may also use Tylenol (650 mg every 4 hours) as needed if the Percocet is too much. You can come off the prescription pain medication when you feel comfortable. NSAIDS such as Motrin can be used as well. The narcotic pain medication causes constipation; drink plenty of fluids, apple juice and prune juice as needed. If you do not have a bowel movement within 5 days drink ½ bottle of magnesium citrate, which is sold at the pharmacy.
- Wound Care & Showering** You may remove the outer bandages approximately 48 hours post procedure. Keep the affected area elevated higher than the heart, this will greatly help the pain. Do not apply salves to the wound; this can increase the risk of infection. Vitamin E cream may be used to minimize scar appearance after 3-4 weeks. Once the dressing is changed you may shower but be sure not to submerge the area in water. Do not use a hot tub, bath, or go swimming until the doctor clears you to do so.
- Ice** Ice is an excellent source of relief of pain, swelling, stiffness, and inflammation. Use it as often as 15-20 minutes three times a day. You may continue to use ice several weeks following surgery. **DO NOT USE HEAT!**
- Return Visits** The office will call you to schedule your post-operative appointments.
- Emergency** Notify the office if you develop a fever >101°F, with unusual increase in pain, redness, and warmth. Report any pus or unusual drainage to our office immediately. It could be a concern if your incisions swell or have drainage. If you encounter any problems, please call our office.

If you feel chest pain or shortness of breath, please go to the nearest ER for evaluation. Do not call the office or wait for an appointment; although extremely rare, this could be a blood clot in the lungs