

**Dr. Trevor M. Brooks MD, FRCSC  
Plastic, Hand & Aesthetic Surgery**

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Mohawk Medical Arts Centre  
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**Call our office if you have:**

- Fever over 37 degrees
- Yellow, green or foul smelling drainage
- A large red area around the incision
- An allergic reaction to the medications, or dressings (this could be shortness of breath, a rash/redness, hives, etc)

**Carpal Tunnel & Hand Surgery Post Operative Care Instructions**

**Dressings/Bandages:**

- If your hand is in a splint please disregard the instructions below and leave your dressing intact. The Occupational/Physical Therapy department will call you to set up your appointments should you require them.
- The dressing applied in the operating room should remain on, dry, and intact for 3 days following surgery.
- You may shower, but keep the dressing dry with a plastic bag, taped to seal it.
- Following removal of the dressing after the 3rd day you may shower and let water run over the incisions.
- Do not soak the area (no baths, hot tubs, pools, lake water or dishwater) until 2-3 weeks after surgery.
- Protect the incision with a light layer of Polysporin and a band-aid for 2 weeks.
- Your sutures are dissolvable (unless Dr. Brooks has said otherwise) and will typically dissolve on their own in 2-4 weeks.

**Medication:**

- Take your regular medications as prescribed (unless Dr. Brooks has instructed you otherwise).
- For pain take acetaminophen (Tylenol) unless Dr. Brooks has instructed you otherwise.
- If you are prescribed an antibiotic, make sure to finish the entire prescription.

**Return to Work:**

- Most patients are able to return to work 3-4 weeks after the surgery.
- People with jobs that require heavy lifting may require more time before returning to full duties.

**Activity:**

- Begin moving your hand and fingers on the day of surgery, but do NOT use your hand for ANY activities until the dressing is removed.
- Swelling is normal- elevate the hand above the level of your heart to minimize swelling and keep your hand elevated on a pillow while sleeping.
- Apply an ice pack as needed to the palm off and on for 20 mins at a time for the first 3-4 days. Place a thin, clean towel between the ice pack and your skin. Do NOT use heat.
- Avoid lifting, pushing, or pulling any object greater than 10 pounds for the first 2 weeks (as a point of reference a 4L milk jug is 9 lbs).
- Do not use exercise equipment until Dr. Brooks has given you the go ahead.
- Avoid driving until you are no longer on pain medication and you feel you can safely operate a vehicle.
- The skin around the incision will peel, this is normal, and will almost always happen.
- You may begin scar massage after 3 weeks. Use firm pressure and cream on the scar. Creams with vitamin A, vitamin E, or Aloe are all excellent choices.

**Diet:**

- Resume your regular diet.
- Drink plenty of fluids, but stay away from alcoholic and caffeinated drinks for 1 week.
- Avoid smoking 4 weeks before and 6 weeks after surgery.

**Sunshine:** After 3 weeks if your surgical site is to be exposed to the sun, apply sunscreen SPF 45 or higher for at least 1 year to prevent the scar from tanning.

**Your Follow up Appointment:**

4-6 weeks after your surgery Dr. Brooks will want to see you again.  
To ensure you will get in within this time frame please call promptly after your surgery (403) 487- 0460.

