

## POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS: ELBOW SURGERY

### FROM HOSPITAL TO HOME

- ❖ You must be accompanied by an adult who can drive you home after surgery.
- ❖ You may have some dizziness from the effects of anesthesia and pain medications.
- ❖ You cannot drive, operate machinery, drink alcohol or make critical decisions for at least 24 hours.

### SURGICAL DRESSING

- ❖ You will be in a splint for your elbow until your first postoperative visit.
- ❖ You must keep the splint clean and dry.
- ❖ If you would like to shower, you need to ensure that your splint remains dry.
- ❖ At your first postoperative visit your sutures will be removed.

### MEDICATIONS

- ❖ A narcotic pain medication will be prescribed to take as needed- please read and follow the instructions on the bottle.
- ❖ If you had a regional block performed by anesthesia, consider taking pain medication prior to the block wearing off completely for better control.
- ❖ Nausea and/or vomiting is a side effect of narcotic medication- if this should happen, consider changing to liquid diet and decreasing activity level.
- ❖ Constipation is another side effect of narcotic medication- you will also have a prescription for a stool softener.
- ❖ While taking narcotic pain medication you cannot drink alcohol or drive.
- ❖ Try to wean off the narcotic pain medication as soon as your pain allows. You can transition to over-the-counter Tylenol (acetaminophen) as needed.

### ACTIVITY

- ❖ Your arm will be in a sling and should remain in the sling until your first postoperative visit- take out for hygiene and to periodically move your wrist and fingers.

### APPOINTMENTS

- ❖ You will see Dr. Kim 2 weeks after surgery.
- ❖ For questions or concerns, please contact the surgery scheduler directly or call 520-784-6200.
- ❖ You should schedule a physical therapy appointment to begin approximately 2-4 weeks after surgery. The timing will be discussed during your postoperative visit.