

Elbow Fracture Post-Operative Care Guide

Your child underwent pinning of their elbow fracture with

Dr. _____
(physician name)

Your post-operative appointment is scheduled in about 3 weeks. At this appointment we plan to remove the cast/splint and ___ pins in the clinic.

Post-Operative Care

- Diet can be restarted. Proceed slowly to prevent nausea/vomiting.
- Keep the elbow, not just the hand, elevated above the heart for the first week to help with swelling.
- Shoulder and finger movement is safe and healthy.
- Return to school once pain is well controlled.
- While in a cast/splint, children should not participate in sports or gym.

CAST/SPLINT CARE

- Keep the cast/splint clean and dry. Double bag and tape cast/splint for showering. Itching is common. **DO NOT** insert anything into the cast/splint to scratch. Instead try tapping on the cast/splint, a blow dryer with cool air, or an antihistamine at night.

PAIN CONTROL

- After the first postoperative day, pain should not increase further.
- Use acetaminophen/ibuprofen according to the package directions.
- Call the office for discussion if pain is not well controlled by acetaminophen/ibuprofen.

FEVERS

- Acetaminophen and encouraging deep breaths are the treatment for fevers during the first 3 days; infections take several days to develop and are an unlikely early cause. If a temperature of $>101^{\circ}\text{F}$ develops later, please call the office.

PLEASE CALL IMMEDIATELY IF:

- Your child develops increasing pain, numbness/tingling, discoloration of the fingers, drainage, or any other concerns. Call the nursing line during business hours (or our main phone number during off hours) with any questions or concerns about post-operative care at (860)-545-9085.

Post-Operative Appointment Care and Beyond

- At this visit you can expect a new X-ray and to have the pins removed.
- You will likely be given a sling only at this time. It takes 3-6 months to regain motion. PT and braces are not routinely required. Return to sport is determined after healing.
- After pin removal, let the pin site wounds heal before using lotion on the area.
- Certain fractures commonly have a bump on the outside of the elbow that does not resolve. This should not limit function.