

Dequervain's Release Post Operative Rehabilitation Protocol

Following Surgery:

- Expect a surgical bulky splint to be kept in place for 10-14 days.
- Elevate and ice for at least 3 days.
- Continue to elevate as often as possible until your next clinic visit. (Elevate above your heart.)
- Shower with a plastic bag covering the splint and seal with tape.
- Take your pain medicine as needed and as prescribed. Call if any problems or questions arise.

Precautions:

- Avoid activities that require sustained pinch in combination with ulnar deviation and/or palmar flexion of the wrist for 6 weeks.

10-14 Days Post Op (at therapy):

- Bulky dressing, splint, and sutures will be removed.
- Therapist will initiate edema management, scar massage, and manual desensitization exercises within 24 hours of suture removal as long as wound is fully healed.
- Gentle active Range of Motion (ROM) to the thumb and wrist is initiated, progressing to gentle passive ROM as wound heals and patient tolerance permits.
- Begin home exercise program.
- Therapist will issue new wrist splint with digits and thumb free to wear at all times except during exercises and showering for 3 weeks. (Usually this is a prefabricated splint, but there are times a custom splint will be made.)

4 Weeks Post Op:

- Follow up appointment in clinic with P.A. or M.D.
- Maximize passive ROM to the thumb and wrist per patient tolerance, continuing active ROM and emphasizing home exercise program.
- Initiate progressive strengthening to thumb and wrist.
- Continue edema management, scar management, and desensitization exercises as needed.
- Begin to wean from splint.

6-8 Weeks Post Op:

- Follow up appointment in clinic with M.D.
- Progressively return to normal use of the hand.
- May begin thumb flexion in combination with wrist flexion at 6 weeks.

Additional Tips:

- Use power grip position when possible (instead of using thumb) with work or sports activities.
- Work with the wrist in a neutral position.
- Incorporate more of the arm when turning screwdriver to distribute the overall force.

