

Full Wrist Fusion Post Operative Rehabilitation Protocol

Following Surgery:

- Expect a bulky surgical dressing and wrist splint for 10-14 days.
- Elevate and ice for at least 3 days.
- Continue to elevate as often as possible until your next clinic visit.
- Shower with a plastic bag covering the splint and seal with tape.
- Take your pain medication as needed and as prescribed.

2 Weeks Post Op:

- Splint and sutures will be removed.
- Application of custom splint at therapy and initiation of HEP for digital motion
- Active and passive Range of Motion (ROM) initiated to fingers, and thumb.

8 Weeks Post Op:

- Follow up appointment in clinic with xrays
- Initiate active and gentle passive ROM to wrist.
- Composite wrist/digit extension/flexion should be avoided to prevent stretching of extrinsic muscles.
- Patients with sedentary jobs may return to work about 3 months.

16 Weeks Post Op:

- Follow up appointment in clinic with xrays
- Removable splint may be discontinued and worn only as needed.
- Gentle strengthening exercises initiated with putty, hand exerciser, or hand weights, followed by job simulations.
- Heavy labor jobs may require up to 6 months.

Considerations:

- Expect no motion of wrist.
- May expect to lift full loads, with no limitations when well healed.
- The fusion plate will not be removed unless you are experiencing discomfort. Recommend waiting 1-2 years after surgery before removing the plate.
- May expect to maintain approximately 50-60% of normal wrist motion and 80% of normal grip strength in ideal cases, but may vary between patients depending on preoperative stiffness and initial course of injury.

