

Post-Operative Instructions for Excision of a Mucous Cyst

Purpose of surgery

The purpose of the surgery is to remove an unsightly, painful, or disfiguring cyst near the tip of your finger (on the nail side).

What to expect after surgery?

You will have a soft dressing that covers the operative finger but leaves the tip exposed so you can monitor the circulation to your finger. You can expect your operative finger, and perhaps its neighbors, to be numb from the local anesthetic for about 24 hours.

What should you do to help recover?

While we do not anticipate significant swelling following this procedure, it would be helpful to keep your hand elevated as best you can for the first 24 hours after surgery. You can also apply a cold-pack to the dressing to help keep swelling to a minimum.

Try to keep your operative finger moving. The dressing will certainly limit the mobility of the tip joint, but try anyway. Any motion you can achieve will help you in the long-run.

Keep your pain under control. While I do not anticipate significant pain, I want to make sure you are comfortable. Take the prescription pain medicine as prescribed for the first day, and decide the next to what extent you need it. Keeping yourself comfortable will allow you to keep your fingers moving and minimize internal scarring from the surgery.

How should you take care of your dressing/wound?

Keep the dressing, and all the skin covered, clean and dry for about 2 days. Afterwards, you may remove the dressing yourself prior to coming in for your first post-operative visit. The wound is covered by a non-adherent patch, followed by gauze, and finally a wrap.

Once the surgical dressing is removed, keep the wound and your skin clean. Soap and water is an excellent skin cleanser, and it is OK to get everything wet in a shower with running water. Avoid immersing your wound under water until the skin looks well healed (1-3 weeks). Please do not use salves like Neosporin™ or Bacitracin™ for the wound. I would prefer soap and water or peroxide; and, I want you to keep it covered with a non-adherent bandage – your wound does not need air to heal, just cleanliness. The sutures are absorbable, and should ‘fall’ out by about 2-3 weeks and sometimes earlier.

How should your hand respond to the surgery?

As I probably explained to you in the office, you can expect the joint to be uncomfortable for anywhere from 1 to 3 or so weeks and this should diminish significantly over that time. This does not mean you will not be able to use your hand, just that it will be sore. The joint will also be stiff for a few weeks as there will be swelling, and because I will have removed bone spurs from the joint.

What should concern you?

Please refer to our website (www.HandCenterGA.com) for helping you to understand our general concerns following any operation. Probably my biggest concern is for infection so keep your wound clean once the dressing is removed, and keep it covered to prevent it from getting contaminated. Should you have any concerns, please call us at 404-255-0226.

When should you come in for your first Post-operative visit?

Your first visit will be within 7-10 days of the operation. That visit should be arranged during your pre-operative appointment. If not, call 404-255-0226 to make that appointment. As long as your wound looks like it is healing well, we will remove your sutures on the first visit.

Do you need therapy?

Most people do not require therapy to help recover from a mucous cyst excision. On the other hand, I will offer it if it seems that your recovery is not progressing quickly.

What activities can you do?

You can do anything that does not hurt. Limit yourself to lifting with the operative hand for a few days or so until it becomes more comfortable.