

## **Pre/Post-Operative Information – Flexor Tendon Repair**

### **Pain Control:**

Start with simple, but effective pain relief strategies such as ice and elevation. Especially for the first 2 - 3 days, attempt to keep your hand above your heart as much as possible. This will significantly limit pain and swelling. Next, try over the counter pain medications such as Tylenol and/or ibuprofen. Most patients tolerate these medications well. Take them with food, and make sure to check your allergies and/or other medications and medical issues to ensure it is safe to take them. Many patients use little or no narcotic medication after a flexor tendon repair, but Dr. Holt will provide a small prescription of narcotics if needed. Take them as directed and only as needed.

### **Dressing/Bandage:**

Keep your dressing on until you follow up with Dr. Holt or with Occupational/Hand Therapist. Keep the dressing/hand clean and dry. Do not remove your splint on your own. Use a plastic bag or cover during showers/hygiene.

### **Activity:**

You should focus on elevation of the hand above your heart for the first 5 – 7 days after surgery. After a flexor tendon repair you need to keep your splint on until removed by Dr. Holt or your therapist and should NOT use your hand until otherwise advised. It is very important to protect your hand and the tendon repair to avoid re-rupture.

### **Additional Information:**

After surgery, you should expect some pain, swelling, and stiffness. Dr. Holt will also discuss with you when to begin dedicated Occupational/Hand Therapy and his team will assist you in making those arrangements. In most cases, we will begin therapy approximately 7 – 10 days after surgery (and before your post-surgical follow up), but this can vary depending on your specific injury. Once you begin therapy, it is very important to follow your therapist's instructions. Flexor tendon rehabilitation is a lengthy and complicated process. Dr. Holt will ensure your therapist has the appropriate instructions and rehabilitation protocol. In general, patients can expect participating in therapy for approximately 3 months after their surgery. Return to unrestricted use of the hand generally takes approximately 3 months. Complications such as scarring/stiffness and/or re-rupture can occur, but are minimized with adherence post-operative restrictions and compliance with your therapy program.

### **Follow-Up:**

Your follow up appointment is generally 10 – 14 days after your surgery and should be in your discharge packet on the day of surgery. Call us if you have any questions at (541) 382-3344.