**Full Wrist Fusion**

*Post Operative Rehabilitation Protocol*

**Following Surgery:**
- Expect a surgical bulky dressing and immobilization splint until fusion takes place (typically 8-10 wks).
- Immediately begin gentle finger motion following surgery to reduce swelling and to prevent stiffness during immobilization period.
- Elevate and ice for at least 3 days—expect moderate finger swelling!
- 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 medication as needed and as prescribed. Call if any problems or questions arise.

**Precautions:**
- Avoid lifting objects heavier than a coffee cup (no more than 5 lbs.) for the first 8 weeks.

**10-14 Days Post Op:**
- Follow up appointment in clinic with P.A., then therapy appointment same day.
- Bulky dressing and sutures will be removed.
- Patient will be fitted with a clamshell brace or cast to wear until fusion heals solid, usually 8-10 weeks.
- Therapist will advise on slow, progressive range of motion exercises of fingers and thumb.

**8-10 Weeks Post Op:**
- Follow up appointment in clinic with P.A. or M.D.
- Once fusion has been obtained, clamshell brace or cast may be discontinued.
- Begin isometric strengthening exercises, progressing to eccentric/concentric exercises.
- Scar mobilization techniques initiated.

**12-14 Weeks Post Op:**
- Follow up appointment in clinic with P.A. or M.D.
- May resume normal use of hand in daily activities.

**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.

*Please visit our website at www.akhanddoc.com for illustrations.*

Note: These instructions are to serve as guidelines and are subject to Physician discretion. Actual progress may be faster or slower depending on the individual.
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