

## **THUMB CMC ARTHROPLASTY:**

### **Postoperative Instructions:**

1. You will be in a splint covering the thumb and wrist until the first post-operative visit. Light use of the fingers is okay. It is okay to use the hand for writing, typing, texting, eating, and taking care of yourself. Full finger range of motion is encouraged to avoid stiffness. The video link below demonstrates finger exercises.
2. Cover the bandage for showers and keep it dry. Mild swelling and bruising are normal as is mild tingling in the fingertips. Ice and elevation can be helpful. If the swelling persists or the bandage feels too tight, it is ok to remove the outer ace bandage and re-wrap it a bit more loosely. If the swelling is excessive or you feel something is wrong, please call.
3. A prescription medication will be sent to your pharmacy. That medication is to be taken as needed for pain. If over-the-counter medications provide satisfactory pain relief, the prescription medication is stopped.
4. It is okay to drive if you feel safe to. Do not drive while taking the prescription pain medication.
5. The typical first follow-up visit is 10-14 days from surgery. A cast on the wrist and thumb will be applied at that visit. In the cast, continued light use is ok. Keep the cast dry and avoid weight bearing greater than 2-3 pounds. That cast will stay on for 3 weeks total.
6. Formal Hand Therapy will begin the day the cast is removed. A prescription will be provided to you beforehand to make that appointment. You can go to the hand/occupational therapist of your choice. Therapy will continue for 6-8 weeks. At the first therapy visit, a small thumb support will be made for you by the therapist. During this time, continued light use is encouraged but no excessive lifting or pushing. The new thumb brace is worn for 4-6 weeks as follows:

#### **Week 1-2:**

Wear brace all the time. Remove for washing and eating. Remove for range of motion exercises every other hour, for 5-10 minutes. It should be worn to sleep.

#### **Week 3-4:**

Remove the brace for washing, eating, sleeping, and resting. Use the brace when you are active around the house or when you leave the house. Continue exercises several times per day.

#### **Week 5-6:**

Only wear the brace when you are doing something that causes discomfort or when doing something more active to protect the thumb.

### **FOLLOW-UP APPT:**



**Dr. Zanaros CMC arthritis videos**

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