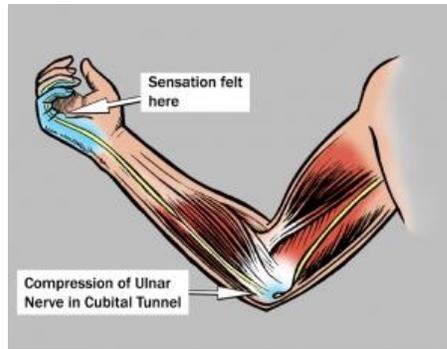


## **Cubital Tunnel Syndrome**



You have been diagnosed with cubital tunnel syndrome. This is caused by compression of your ulnar nerve at the elbow. The ulnar nerve travels from neck down your arm through a tunnel at your elbow called the “cubital tunnel.” The nerve is especially vulnerable to compression because the cubital tunnel is very narrow and has very little soft tissue to protect it. This compression causes numbness and/or tingling pain in your elbow, hand, wrist, or fingers. This is commonly caused by leaning on your elbow for long periods of time or swelling caused by friction of your ulnar nerve rubbing along structures of the cubital tunnel.

### **ULNAR NERVE DECOMPRESSION**

During ulnar nerve decompression, the nerve is either decompressed or moved from its current location in the tunnel to another to relieve compression of the nerve. This will prevent friction or stretching of the nerve when your elbow is bent. The procedure is performed under general anesthesia which means you will be asleep throughout the procedure. The procedure will take anywhere from 1- 1.5 hours- including recovery time. You will be required to have a driver the day of surgery.

### **WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER SURGERY**

Depending on your job duties, you may be able to return to work under certain restrictions- provided you are no longer taking narcotic pain medication (You may transition into over the counter Tylenol, Ibuprofen, or Aleve for your symptoms as tolerated). You will need to avoid heavy lifting and submerging your hand in water until after your post-operative appointment with your surgeon. We suggest you speak with your employer regarding job demands to agree on an expected time of return.

This procedure can be painful to most, so it is expected that you will require narcotic pain medication for the first couple of days. Commonly, patients note an increase in symptoms for

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approximately the first week after surgery. This will slowly subside over time. You may also experience some bruising and/or swelling. These symptoms may be alleviated through Ibuprofen or Aleve, elevation, and ice. (Please do not take additional Tylenol if you are taking narcotic pain medication; this already has Tylenol).

Your bandages will cover your hand up your arm past your elbow leaving your fingers free for movement. Your digits will be free to perform normal activities of daily living. It is recommended that you keep your digits moving to prevent swelling after surgery; however, we suggest you refrain from heavy lifting until after your post-operative appointment.

You will leave on the post-operative bandage until your post-operative appointment. Do not get the incision or bandages wet. For the next two weeks you will have restrictions that will include no full extension of your operative elbow- your flexion will not be restricted. This restriction will be at your caution and will not require the use of a splint or brace.

Following your hand surgery, it may be difficult to open your medication bottles. If you prefer, you may request non-childproof bottles from your pharmacist when dropping off prescriptions. However, please consider the risks if you have small children in your home or if any small children may be accessible to these medications.

## **REASONS TO CALL OUR OFFICE**

Your post-operative temporary splint will allow for fluctuating swelling following surgery. However, if the splint feels too tight you may remove the outer wrap and replace this wrap with an ACE wrap that is less tight. This will be removed at your post-operative visit with your surgeon.

**Please contact the office if you wish to take extended time for recovery or if your job requirements do not allow you to return. You may file FMLA or Short-Term Disability paperwork. Contact our office at 913-652-6348 with any questions or concerns.**

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