

AFTER SURGERY

Postoperative Instructions: Distal Radius Fracture (ORIF)

Getting Home

- An adult must drive you home after surgery.
- You may feel dizzy from anesthesia and pain medication.
- Avoid driving, operating machinery, drinking alcohol, or making major decisions for 24 hours.

Splint Care

- You will be in a splint for your wrist — keep it clean and dry at all times.
- An ace bandage is wrapped over the splint. If it feels too tight, it's okay to loosen it and re-wrap it snugly yourself.
- Some swelling and pain are expected after surgery and should gradually improve — this is normal.

Medications

A narcotic pain medication may be prescribed to take as needed. If a prescription pain medication is needed, it will be either a narcotic or Journavx® (suzetrigine), a non-opioid option.

Narcotic Pain Medication

- Take as needed, following the instructions on your prescription bottle.
- May cause nausea, vomiting, or constipation — a stool softener will also be prescribed.
- Do not drink alcohol or drive while taking this medication.
- Wean off as soon as your pain allows; transition to over-the-counter Tylenol (acetaminophen) as needed.

Journavx® (suzetrigine)

- Bring your prescription with you on the day of surgery — your first 100 mg dose is given in the preop holding area.
- Beginning 12 hours later: 50 mg every 12 hours, typically continued for up to 2 weeks.
- Swallow tablets whole — do not chew or crush.

Activity

- Take your pain medication as directed on the prescription label.
- You will be given a sling for comfort — please use it until your first postoperative visit.
- Elevate the hand/wrist above your heart to reduce pain and swelling.
- Move your fingers and shoulder regularly to support circulation and prevent stiffness.

Follow-Up & Questions

- You will see Dr. Kim or her PA about 2 weeks after surgery, when your splint will be taken down. If you're unsure of your appointment date, call (503) 717-7060 to verify.
- Call our office at (503) 717-7060 with any questions or concerns after surgery.
- Physical therapy typically begins 2–6 weeks after surgery — timing will be confirmed at your postoperative visit.

If you're experiencing a medical emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.