



PLASTIC SURGERY AUSTIN  
Sanjay K. Sharma, M.D., F.A.C.S.

### What To Expect With Your Carpal Tunnel Surgery

Thank you for choosing our practice for your carpal tunnel surgery. We strive to make this experience as easy and comfortable for you as possible. Please consider the following points as you prepare for and recover from your surgery.

1. When you wake up from surgery, your hand will be wrapped with gauze like a boxer's glove. Please keep the dressings clean and dry until you take them off. You may cover it with a plastic bag when you shower.
2. Keep your hand elevated above the level of your heart. It is best to be in the "question-asking position", with your forearm vertical, and your elbow at the level of your shoulder. The easiest way to achieve this is to use the foam pillow you were sent home with. However, be sure to remove the pillow periodically and move your shoulder and elbow through their full range of motion to prevent stiffness.
3. Because infection is extremely rare, Dr. Sharma does not routinely prescribe an antibiotic following outpatient hand procedures. Signs of infection include but are not limited to: fever or chills, worsening pain or swelling, redness spreading past the incision site, new drainage from the incision site. If you fear you may have an infection, please call the office at 512-324-8320. If it's after business hours, you can page the doctor on call at MedLink (512-323-5465).
4. For carpal tunnel surgeries, most patients take Tylenol and ibuprofen for post-op pain control. A prescription for Norco (acetaminophen with hydrocodone), Percocet (acetaminophen with oxycodone), or Tylenol (acetaminophen) with codeine may be prescribed for you if necessary. Please remember Norco, Percocet, and Tylenol with codeine contain acetaminophen (as do many over-the-counter medicines, such as cold medicine) so DO NOT take additional acetaminophen if you are still taking these pain medications. It is safe to take the narcotics and ibuprofen concurrently in an alternating fashion to provide better pain relief. Also, please remember that it is *dangerous and illegal* to drive or operate heavy machinery while taking narcotic pain medication.
5. You can take the post-op dressings off on your third day post-op. If the dressings are sticking to the incision, wetting them in the shower will help it come off. You may gently wash the incision in the shower or sink with warm soapy water. Avoid dirty water while the sutures are in place (no bathwater, dishwater, or swimming pools; do not submerge your hand in water). Until the sutures come out, you may dress the incision with a large Band-Aid or keep open to air.

**NORTHWEST OFFICE:** 6811 Austin Center Blvd, Suite 420 Austin, TX 78731

**DOWNTOWN OFFICE:** 1601 Trinity St Stop 704 Austin, TX 78712

**SOUTH OFFICE:** 5301 B Davis Ln #200 Austin, TX 78749

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6. Your first follow-up appointment will be in about 2 weeks with the physician's assistants. Sutures will be removed at this time.
7. Follow-up with Dr. Sharma is typically at 6 weeks post-op. However, if you have no complaints or concerns, you have the option of following up as needed instead.
8. Again, please do not hesitate to call Dr. Sharma's office if you have any needs, questions or concerns at 512-324-8320!

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