

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

**Dr. Erik Dorf**

Scapholunate injuries are complex, however, this type of surgery is common to my practice. I have found the results of scapholunate repair to be consistent and reliable. Keep in mind that every person responds differently to surgery and treatment, and your recovery may vary from the outline below. Factors which influence the recovery process include:

- Your age and health.
- The severity of your fracture/nature of your injury
- The length of time between the injury and the surgery
- Your compliance with prescribed treatment and therapy



1. ***SURGERY DAY:*** You will be placed in a splint that immobilizes your thumb, covered by an ace wrap. Your fingers and elbow will move freely. You will keep this on until your first follow up visit, which occurs at two weeks after surgery. Please do not remove the splint or get it wet. You may use a small garbage bag and tape to keep it dry in the shower/bathtub.
2. ***FIRST TWO WEEKS AFTER SURGERY:*** You should **elevate your hand and wiggle your fingers** as much as possible in the first 48 hours. Ice can also be used to reduce inflammation. You will be provided with pain medication, and can supplement with Tylenol. I discourage the use of ibuprofen for the first two weeks after surgery. **No heavy lifting.**
3. ***AT YOUR TWO WEEK POST OP OFFICE VISIT:*** We will place you into a cast and remove your sutures. We do not get x-rays at your first visit. You are encouraged to use your hand gently after being placed in a cast. Again **no heavy lifting.**
4. ***SIX WEEKS AFTER SURGERY:*** We will remove your cast. We will get x-rays at this time to monitor your progress. We will pull your pins out at this time and place you back in a cast.
5. ***10-12 WEEKS AFTER SURGERY:*** We will see you back in our clinic for a repeat exam. We will repeat x-rays at that time as well. We will transition you into a brace at this time and begin physical therapy.
6. ***HOW LONG TO GET BETTER?*** Most people are **mostly** better by four to six months after their surgery. No one is completely better at this time. But you can typically return to most of your normal activities at this time.
7. ***HOW LONG FOR FULL RECOVERY?*** It usually takes people **six months to a year** before they can expect full improvement after having surgery. Many people will continue to improve for up to a year.

**Should you have any questions, please call any of our offices at the following numbers:**  
Edwards (970) 569-3240      Frisco (970) 668-3633      Vail (970) 476-7220