

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER UCL REPAIR SURGERY

Dr. Erik Dorf

UCL surgery is very common to my practice and I have found the results to be consistent and reliable. Keep in mind that every person responds differently to surgery and treatment, and your recovery may vary from the below outline. Typical 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 short splint, covered by an ace wrap. Your elbow and fingers (not thumb) will move freely. You will keep this on until your first follow up visit, which occurs at two weeks. Please do not remove the splint or get it wet. You may use a kitchen garbage bag and duct tape to keep it dry in the shower/bathtub.
2. ***FIRST 48 HOURS AFTER SURGERY:*** You should try **to elevate your hand and wiggle your fingers** as much as possible. Ice can also be used to reduce inflammation. You will be provided with pain medication.
3. ***FIRST TWO WEEKS:*** After surgery you should use your hand as much as possible for normal activities. **No heavy lifting.**
4. ***AT YOUR TWO WEEK POST OP OFFICE VISIT:*** We will place you into a thumb spica cast. You are again encouraged to use your hand as much as possible after being placed in a cast. Again **no heavy lifting.**
5. ***ONE MONTH AFTER SURGERY:*** We will remove your cast and transition you into a thumb spica brace. You will wear the brace nearly full time for the following 2 weeks, and part time after that, specifically for more aggressive activities until you are 3 months out from surgery.
6. ***SIX WEEKS AFTER SURGERY:*** We will see you back in our clinic for a repeat exam at six weeks after your surgery.
7. ***THERAPY:*** If at any time during this treatment course it appears you will require **therapy** to help decrease swelling, or improve range of motion you will be provided with a prescription for therapy. Approximately half of our patients require some sort of therapy.
8. ***HOW LONG TO GET BETTER?*** **Most** people are **mostly** better by 10 to 12 weeks after surgery. No one is completely better at this time. You can typically return to all your normal activities at this time.
9. ***HOW LONG FOR FULL RECOVERY?*** It usually takes people **six months** before they can expect full improvement after having surgery for a UCL repair

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