

Frequently Asked Post-Op Questions after Trigger Finger Release:

My surgery is done, now what do I need to do?

For 10-14 days after surgery, you will wear a bulky dressing that will stay on until your first post-op appointment. Your wrist and elbow are free to move. Showering with a bag taped at the forearm over the bandages will keep everything dry and clean. At your first post-op appointment, your sutures will be removed by nursing staff or physician assistant. At this point in time you can shower and perform range of motion exercises and activities as tolerated. At 5-6 weeks after the surgery, you will see your surgeon for a final checkup on recovery. It is recommended that you stretch/straighten your fingers as much as possible to prevent the fingers from tightening up. We will have you see our hand therapist in 3-5 days to start stretching the finger(s).

How soon will I see relief of my symptoms?

You will notice complete relief of any triggering/locking immediately after surgery. Tenderness at the incision site is expected and can last for weeks to months. Some patients may also experience difficulty with stiffness and not being able to fully straightening the affected finger(s). Stretching and/or therapy can help with this.

When can I go back to work?

You can return to work the day after surgery if your work demands are low. But usually taking 3-5 days off before returning to work is most ideal if the job does not require too much manual labor or lifting greater than 1-2 pounds. If the job requires a lot of manual labor, heavy use of the surgical hand in the first 2 weeks will be difficult and may lead to wound breakdown. In this case it is recommended to either take time off or return to light duty for 2 weeks and then gradually ease your way into heavier activities.

What can I do for my pain?

You will have a pain medication prescribed to you to take, if needed. Also limiting activities, elevating, and applying some ice can help manage post-op pain. You are allowed to use any over the counter medication of choice if you wish to avoid the prescribed narcotic. You should not drink alcohol, drive or operate heavy dangerous machinery while on the narcotic.

Are there any concerning signs or symptoms I should look for during my recovery?

If you experience fever; significant redness or swelling around the incision; excess bleeding or other drainage from the incision; abnormal numbness; or increased pain around the incision contact your our office at 812-333-2556.

Will the surgical scar discomfort and redness improve?

Yes. This may take weeks to months but it does improve. Once the incision has fully healed you can massage the scar with some over the counter cream (any moisturizing cream or Vitamin E based cream) to help. And when outdoors, applying sunblock to the scar will help it from becoming too visible. The scar will eventually become invisible after around a year.

What is the success rate of trigger finger release surgery? What is the recurrence rate?

The success rate of surgery in providing relief of symptoms is extremely high. This is the one of most commonly performed procedure in hand surgery and is one of the most successful, so it is extremely

rewarding for patients and providers. There is no chance of recurrence when the surgery is done well the first time around.

What are the risks during, and after trigger finger release surgery?

As with any surgery, there is a small degree of risk. Some risks include bleeding, bruising, infection, injury to the nerve or its branches, injuries to blood vessels, scar tenderness and sensitivity, and stiffness (flexion contracture) of the fingers. The complication rates above are extremely rare other than some minor reversible side effects such as scar tenderness and finger stiffness which resolves over weeks or months.

Thank you for allowing us to be your orthopedic and hand surgery office and providers of choice.

Sincerely,

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Electronic link and downloadable version of this educational material is also available online at

TarekSibaiMD.com