

## **Osteochondral Allograft Transplant ( OATS Procedure) for the ELBOW**

### ***What is a OATS procedure?***

*A fresh frozen cadaveric graft is used to obtain a small plug of bone and cartilage to fill the defect in your elbow. Over 3 months your body will incorporate the graft and the cartilage.*

### ***Length of Stay***

This is usually done as an outpatient surgery. You will need to have someone to drive you home after you have been discharged.

### ***Anesthesia***

Patients will have general anesthesia, which means you are asleep.

### ***Incision***

You will have an incision down the back of your elbow and possibly 5 small 1 cm incisions around your elbow if you also get an arthroscopy. After the incisions have healed, it is usually very thin and not very noticeable.

### ***Pain***

You will have pain medication prescribed for you prior to discharge. After the nerve block wears off you will have discomfort. Most of the pain is related to your very swollen shoulder. That swelling will resolve in 24-48 hours. Its is important to stay on top of the pain medication. Most patients receive Toradol, which is a strong anti-inflammatory. Begin taking this medication when you get home. The Narcotic you are prescribed should be used as a rescue medication as needed. For the first 2 days it is advised that you take 1 of these pills around the clock to stay on top of the pain. If it is too strong, you can take Extra strength Tylenol in its place.

### ***Sling***

Your arm will be placed in a sling prior to leaving the operating room. When you go home you only need to wear the sling for protection, i.e. in a crowded area.

### ***Dressings***

You will go home with an elbow splint. You may shower when you go home with this splint on but it needs to be covered in a large trash bag. The splint **MUST NOT GET WET**. The splint will be removed at your post operative visit.

### ***Physical Therapy***

Formal Physical Therapy should begin in 2 weeks after surgery . If you are a Overhead athlete, throwing will begin at 4-6 months and return to play will be at 6-9 months depending on your progress.

### ***Restrictions***

Recovery from an OATS procedure is three months. During that time you will have restrictions on the use of your operative arm. You may drive when you feel that you can properly control a car and you are **NOT** taking narcotic pain medication.

### ***Post Op Ice Therapy***

Plan to use ice on the elbow intermittently at least for the first 48 hours after surgery. You should use ice therapy on the elbow for 15-minute increments throughout the day. Using ice therapy helps decrease pain and swelling. You can use it daily as needed throughout your recovery period.

**Day of surgery to Week 6:** no active reaching and lifting, no closing doors, no reaching behind your back, no pushing up from a seated position, and no repetitive movements.

### ***Follow Up Appt***

You should have had your follow up appointment made at the time of your preoperative appointment. You should be seen at around 10-14 days.

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