

HAND THERAPY – HOME EXERCISE PROGRAM

Following a hand injury, pain, swelling and stiffness are common complaints. The following guidelines are helpful tools in relieving these problems:

PAIN

- 1) Ice pack or cool pack – apply to the affected area for 10 minutes. Wrap ice in a towel.
- 2) Massage – use mild to moderate pressure over the painful area
- 3) Heat – apply to sore muscles or joints not affected by swelling. Use a warm heating pad or water/whirlpool for 10 minutes. Beware of burns, especially if your sensation is decreased

SWELLING

- 1) Elevate – raise your hand/arm above the level of your heart
- 2) Ice pack or cool pack application – see above
- 3) Contrast bath – Fill a basin/sink with warm water and the other with cool water. Squeeze your hand in the warm water for 90 seconds and 30 seconds in the cool water – alternate between the two for a total of 10 minutes (Can do ROM exercises below in water)

SKIN CARE

- 1) Wash your hand with soap and water
- 2) Apply cream or lotion to dry skin
- 3) Use Polysporin ointment on open wounds – just enough to prevent bandages from sticking

RANGE OF MOTION EXERCISES (_____ Repetitions per day)

Active:

- 1) Bend fingertips to base of fingers – 10 reps
- 2) Make a full fist (thumb over fingers) – 10 reps
- 3) Bend fingertips to base of palm – 10 reps
- 4) Bend thumb down and up – 10 reps
- 5) Bend wrist forward and backward – 10 reps



Passive:

Push your fingers or wrist to their furthest range with your other hand – use pain as your guide.

****If any of the exercises cause pain that doesn't subside in 30-60 minutes or causes a lot more swelling, decrease the number of repetitions**

DESENSITIZATION

- 1) Touch and tap different textures and rub the affected area on various surfaces
- 2) Use your hand in normal daily activity to retrain affected nerves for normal activity

STRENGTHENING

- 1) Practice squeezing a towel or sponge until your hand feels tired
- 2) Use your hand during your Activities of Daily Living

If you have any questions, please call Saint Elizabeth Rehab Health (905) 883-2000