




Nicholas Wessling, MD

Orthopedic Foot & Ankle and
Sports Medicine Specialist
212-737-3301



 [nwessling.md](https://www.instagram.com/nwessling.md)

Distal Biceps Post-Op Instructions

Pain Medication

Pain levels vary between patients. Some people require little or no pain medication, while others may need the full prescribed amount during the first few days after surgery.

Take your medication **only as prescribed** and avoid additional over-the-counter pain relievers unless approved by your physician.

Elevation and Ice

Keep your arm **elevated above heart level** as much as possible to reduce swelling and discomfort.

- Use pillows or an armrest for support.
- Apply ice over your surgical dressing for up to **20 minutes at a time**, several times per day.
- Allow your arm to warm before reapplying ice.
- Keep your dressing dry at all times.

It is normal to have some swelling of the hand and fingers even with proper elevation and icing.

Nerve Block

If you received a nerve block, your arm may remain numb for up to **24 hours**.

As the block wears off, you may notice:

- Tingling or “pins and needles” sensations
- Gradual return of movement and feeling
- Increased soreness or discomfort as sensation returns

Sling

If you received a nerve block, you should have gone home with a sling.

Continue wearing the sling until **the nerve block has completely worn off** and you have full control of the arm.

Surgical Dressing and Showering

Keep your post-operative **splint and dressing on at all times**.

- Do **not remove or loosen** the dressing until your first post-op visit.
- Keep the dressing **clean and dry**.
- Cover it with a **waterproof bag** while showering.
- Use caution to avoid slipping or falling.
- Do **not lift, push, or bear weight** with the operated arm before your follow-up appointment.

First Post-Operative Appointment

Your first follow-up visit should be scheduled **7–10 days after surgery**.

If you do not yet have an appointment, please call the office to schedule one.

Physical Therapy

Physical therapy details and scheduling will be reviewed at your first post-operative appointment.

A list of **recommended therapists** will be provided at that time.

Driving

Do **not drive** until cleared by your surgical team at your first follow-up visit.

Never drive while taking prescription pain medication.

Common Post-Operative Concerns

- **Bruising and swelling** of the arm and hand are common. Gravity can cause bruising to move downward toward the fingers. Elevation and icing help reduce this.
- **Numbness or tingling** can occur due to the nerve block or swelling around the incision.
- **A rush of fullness or aching** in the arm when standing is normal in the early days after surgery.

Patient Portal

For non-urgent communication, please use the **NY Orthopedics Patient Portal**:

Visit www.newyorkorthopedics.com → click “**Patient Portal Log In**” → then select “**Sign Up Today**” and follow the instructions to register.

Call the Office Immediately if You Experience:

- Severe pain not relieved by medication
- Fever over **101.3°F** or chills
- Redness, drainage, or increased swelling around the incision

Go to the Nearest Emergency Room if You Experience:

- Shortness of breath, chest pain, or heaviness in the chest

Reminder:

These are general guidelines for recovery after surgery.

If you have additional questions or concerns, please call our office or send a message through the Patient Portal.