

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PATIENTS AFTER ROUTINE SHOULDER SURGERY

1. Wound Care

Remove the entire dressing the day following surgery. Place regular Band-Aids or clean gauze over the incisions. It is normal to have some blood on the original dressing. There may be some spotting from the incisions for a few days. Be prepared to experience some swelling for the first few weeks. This is normal and a reflection of the fluid in your shoulder at the time of surgery. You may take a shower the day following the surgery however, keep direct flow of water off the incisions. After showering, dry the incisions with a clean towel and replace with fresh Band-Aids or gauzes. The incisions will have a little redness around them while they heal. If they get redder each day or if you notice excessive drainage after the first 72 hours following surgery, call the office.

2. Cold Therapy

Ice the shoulder 3 to 4 times a day at 30 minute intervals. It is important to remember to always ice your shoulder after exercise. Increase or decrease duration of icing for maximum comfort.

3. Pain Medicine

You will receive a prescription for pain medicine on or before the day of surgery. Do not mix the pain medicine with alcohol. As the shoulder becomes more comfortable you may substitute acetaminophen (Tylenol). Avoid Aspirin or Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) or other anti-inflammatory medication for about one week. These medicines can cause a bleeding tendency after surgery.

4. Physical Therapy and Exercises

NON ROTATOR CUFF OR LABRAL REPAIRS

- i) Please refer to the shoulder exercise sheet. These exercises should be done at least four times a day. If you need pain medication, take it about one half hour before you exercise. You should have some pain with the exercise but it should last only 10 to 15 minutes. It should only take 10 to 15 minutes to do all the exercises.

ROTATOR CUFF OR LABRAL REPAIRS

- i) The physical therapy is very specific to the repair that was performed. Please refer to the appropriate physical therapy protocol to determine the allowed activity level

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5. Work

If you have a desk job (minimal carrying or lifting), you may return to work as early as the next day, pain permitting. However, you can expect to be completely back at work within a week. If your job involves more physical labor your return to work date will be determined during your follow-up appointments.

6. Follow-up

If a post-operative appointment has not been made prior to surgery, call the office within 48 hours following surgery to schedule an appointment for suture removal and examination two weeks from the date of surgery.

7. Possible Reactions

- i) *Fever* – a temperature of up to 101° is expected for the first two weeks following surgery. If this should occur, take Tylenol every four hours as needed. Call the office for fevers in excess of 102° that do not respond to Tylenol.
- ii) *Drainage* – a small amount of clear or blood-tinged drainage is expected for the first 72 hours following surgery. If you have excessive drainage following this period, or any thick or foul smelling drainage from the wound, call the office.
- iii) *Wound* – if the wound should open, notify the office immediately.
- iv) *Swelling* – you may experience swelling for many weeks after the surgery, this is normal. During the first two weeks after surgery, the swelling from the shoulder may gradually travel down to the wrist and hand. This is to be expected, as it is an effect of gravity.

If you have any further questions, feel free to call the office any time at (805) 495-3687. At nights or on weekends you may contact our answering service and ask for the on call.