

# Shoulder Arthroscopy Post Op Instructions

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PRISMA  
HEALTH SM

**Surgery:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date/Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Initial Instructions

- Ice along with pain medicine are your keys to initial pain management.
- After you arrive home, rest the remainder of the day. You may be tired or nauseated from the anesthesia and/or pain medication.
- You will be in a sling after surgery. You may be in this sling up to 6 weeks after surgery, depending on your procedure.

## Dressing Change

- Leave the dressing in place for 48 hours following surgery.
- After this, remove the dressing making sure to leave the sutures of the incisions in place.
- You may have a small incision in your armpit if a biceps tenodesis was performed. This incision will be covered with Dermabond glue.
- It is extremely important to keep the surgical site clean and dry at all times to help prevent infection.
- Signs of infection include redness, swelling, increased pain, warmth, fever (above 101.4 degrees F) and drainage from the wound. If you note any of these signs, please call the office immediately at 864-206-5905.

## Bathing

- You may shower **5 days after your surgery** and get your incisions wet as long as the wounds are dry and not draining. Let the water run down over the incisions but do not rub or scrub them.
- If the wounds are draining, then wait until they are dry before getting them wet.
- **Do not soak or submerge** the surgical site until the wounds are completely healed (typically 3-4 weeks after surgery).

## Activity

- Keep sling in place at all times as directed, unless directed otherwise
- OK to remove sling with minimal movement about arm for dressing, hygiene, and prescribed exercises
- May return to **sedentary work ONLY** or school 3-4 days after surgery, if pain is tolerable

- **OK to use computer.** Use your other hand to place your operated extremity on the desk or keyboard and allow it to fully rest there without using your own muscles to keep it in position.

## **Physical Therapy**

- **You will be discharged with a physical therapy prescription and a physical therapy protocol.** The protocol is a description for you and your physical therapist that details all of your restrictions and activities through your entire recovery. Please be sure to give this to your physical therapist.
- Please arrange your post-operative physical therapy appointment. Our office can help you with this if needed. You may start as soon as the day following your surgery, but most prefer the week after surgery. They will guide you in exercises to perform while in the clinic and at home.

## **Sling/Immobilizer**

- You will be put in a sling after surgery
- Sling should be worn at all times (except for hygiene and exercises)
- Keep your elbow position against the pillow and even with your side or in front of this position to minimize stress on the repair.
- You may be wearing the sling for 6 weeks post-operatively, depending upon your procedure.

## **Ice Therapy**

- Icing is very important to decrease swelling and pain and improve mobility.
- Please use ice for 20 minutes each hour over surgical site.
- After 24 hours, continue to use the ice 3-4 times a day, 15-20 minutes each time.
- Be sure to keep clothing or a towel between ice and skin, as placing the ice directly on skin may cause frostbite. **DO NOT PLACE DIRECTLY ON SKIN.**

## **Medications**

- **If placed, nerve blocks and pain medication injected into the wound will wear off from 8-24 hours after surgery.**
- You will be given a narcotic pain medication. This should be taken as needed every 4-6 hours for pain. Take with a little food.
- Narcotic pain medications **will not alleviate all of your discomfort**
- **Ice and elevation** will aide in additional pain control
- Take medications as prescribed
- **Do not mix narcotics** with alcohol
- Common side effects of narcotic pain medications include
  - Nausea- Take medication with food. If prescribed you may use anti-nausea medication. If nausea persists, call the office to consider having the medication changed.
  - Drowsiness
  - Constipation - We recommend purchasing an over-the-counter stool softener (such as colace) to take as directed while taking narcotics to prevent constipation. You will be given a prescription for this.

- **Do not drive a vehicle or operate heavy machinery while on narcotic pain medications**
- Narcotic medications cannot be called into the pharmacy. They will require a hand written prescription from the office. Please monitor the amount of pain medications you have remaining in order to not run out
- **Narcotics and pain medications will not be refilled on weekends or after hours.**
- You will likely be given a prescription for aspirin 325mg to take post-operatively. This is taken only once a day for 4 weeks post-operatively to prevent blood clots. The dosing and duration may change on an individual basis, but it should be reflected in the prescription that you are given.
- We also recommend taking an anti-inflammatory if you are able to tolerate them, such as Motrin or Naproxen, unless you are taking blood thinners or instructed not to take the anti-inflammatories by your doctor. Take as directed. Take with food.

### **Post-Op Office Appointment**

- If the appointment was not arranged prior to surgery, please contact the office at 864-206-5905.
- Your first post-operative visit will be given to prior to your surgery.
- Depending on the procedure plan for follow-up visits at 6 weeks, 3 months, and 6 months after surgery.

### **Emergencies or Concerns**

- Email Dr. Ratner at [drewratnermd@gmail.com](mailto:drewratnermd@gmail.com)
- Or Contact us at 864-206-5905 or go to the nearest emergency room if you have any of the following:
  - Pain worsens or does not go away after pain medication is taken.
  - Any abrupt change in the nature or severity of pain
  - Redness or swelling in your thigh or calf that will not decrease.
  - Redness around incisions
  - Continuous drainage or bleeding from the incision (occasional drainage is expected)
  - Difficulties moving your fingers or extreme pain when moving your fingers
  - Numbness or tingling that does not go away or is getting worse
  - Cold foot or color change in extremity (Please be aware that the skin prep in surgery may have an orange, brown, or blue tint)
  - Develop a fever greater than 101.5 degrees F.
  - Chest pain, shortness of breath, intractable nausea/vomiting, or anything else concerning
  - If you have an emergency that requires immediate attention, proceed to the nearest emergency room.