

## **POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS: SHOULDER ARTHROSCOPY**

### **Diet**

- You may resume your regular diet without restrictions. However, start slow with clear liquids and gradually work your way back to your normal diet. This will help prevent nausea and vomiting.

### **Wound Care**

- You can remove the outer layer of dressings (Medipore tape and padding) 4 days after surgery. After that, you are permitted to shower.
- You will have 2-5 small incisions around the shoulder that are closed with sutures. You do not need to cover the sutures with band-aids or any formal dressings. However, you can do so for your own comfort or at your own discretion.
- Do not put any lotions or antibiotic ointments over the incisions until they are completely closed.
- Do not submerge your surgical extremity or soak in a hot tub, swimming pool, or bath until 4 weeks post-operative when your incisions have completely healed.
- Any sutures or skin closure will be removed at your first post-op visit.

### **DVT Prevention**

- You must wear your white TED hose compressive stockings for 2 weeks after surgery. These stockings reduce swelling which improves healing and helps to prevent blood clots.
- Please remain ambulatory and perform ankle pumps to help prevent blood clots.
- Sometimes we have to prescribe a blood thinner to help prevent blood clots (especially if you have a personal or family history of DVT/Pulmonary embolism). If discussed prior to surgery, please defer to our recommendations given pre-op. Unless recommended you do not need to take any aspirin or other DVT prophylaxis.
- If you are traveling after surgery, please let us know: we advise that you wait at least one week between surgery date and travel. Please see below for some general tips for preventing blood clots when traveling:
  - Get up on the plane to crutch/walk every hour or if driving stop every 1-2 hours to get up and walk
  - Stay hydrated. Avoid alcohol and caffeine
  - Wear your TED hose stockings for the duration of your travel
  - Take 325mg Aspirin the day before, day of, and day after the travel (if advised)
  - Perform your exercises during travel; especially the ankle pumps
  - If you experience pain or swelling in your calf, please call our office immediately or go to a local emergency department for evaluation.

### **Post-Operative Activity and Weight Bearing**

- Your sling is to be worn AT ALL TIMES until your block wears off. After that, use the sling as needed for comfort and when in crowds of people to protect from bumps or impact. You are permitted to perform shoulder pendulums and elbow range of motion as tolerated. Please refrain from lifting, reaching, and picking up any item over 5 pounds.
  - EXCEPTION: REPAIRS. YOU WILL BE GIVEN MODIFIED INSTRUCTIONS WITH WEIGHTBEARING RESTRICTIONS.
- Keep the surgical extremity elevated with the hand higher than the elbow and pointed towards the ceiling to avoid swelling into the hand and fingers.
- You may find it more comfortable and easier to sleep in a reclined position after surgery. This can be accomplished by sleeping on a few pillows or sleeping in a recliner chair.
- Do not drive; we will discuss a return to driving at your first post-op appointment.
- Perform the exercises included in this packet (or that you were instructed at pre-op visit) 3-4 times a day for 10 minutes each session unless otherwise instructed. Begin them the day after surgery.
- You may find in your blue surgical folder an order for physical therapy; if so please begin 2-3 days after surgery. If there is no order for physical therapy present in this folder, arrangements will be made at your first post-op appointment.

### **Cold Therapy**

- Ice should be used to help reduce pain and swelling. Use it as often as possible the first 3 days after surgery, alternating 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off. After the third day, use it at least 3-5 times a day for 20 minutes until pain and swelling have resolved.
- When icing after your surgical dressing has been removed, do not put ice directly over healing skin. Use a barrier between to prevent any contact burns.
- Usage of an ice machine is at your own risk. Please read all instructions prior to purchasing or using one as the instructions differ by make and model.

### **Pain Medication**

- Take your pain medication as prescribed. This usually means 1 tablet every 4 hours for mild pain or 2 tablets every 4-6 hours for more severe pain. Do not take any additional Tylenol when taking these narcotic medications.
- You can also use over-the-counter NSAIDS once you are eating well. They will help to reduce pain, swelling, and stiffness. We recommend that you transition to either Aleve or Ibuprofen (following dosage on the bottle) when your pain is manageable.
- Narcotic pain medication can cause constipation if taken regularly. We have prescribed stool softeners. You can also take, fiber bars, Metamucil, or prune juice.
- You are not permitted to drive while taking your narcotic pain medication.
- The pain medication can cause nausea so always take it with food.

**\*\*Effective in 2014:** Federal regulation prevents the ability to call or fax post-operative medications to pharmacies (including refills). **Every prescription must be an original and picked up in person:** we cannot fax or call in these medications to your pharmacy.

**\*\*Please call a minimum of 24 hours prior to needing additional medications** in order to provide you with the handwritten copy. **All requests for prescriptions prior to the weekend must be received by Thursday at noon.** Failure to plan accordingly and contact our office prior to needing a refill may prevent you from obtaining your medication.

#### **Nerve Blocks for Anesthesia**

- Nerve blocks last approximately 12-24 hours. You may notice tingling on occasion after the block wears off. This usually resolves in several days but if persists please call our office. As you begin to regain sensation please take your pain medication before the block completely wears off; this helps you stay ahead of your pain.

#### **Notify the Office if you Experience the Following**

- Flu-like symptoms, nausea/vomiting, temperature of 101.5 degrees or higher, severe chills; foul odor, redness, or increased tenderness or drainage from the incision. These are signs of a possible infection. You may need to report to an Emergency Room.
- Hot tender area or unusually large amounts of swelling in either calf or other area of the leg; chest pain, shortness of breath or coughing up blood. These are signs of a possible blood clot and you may need to report to an Emergency Room or call an ambulance.
- **If you have any other URGENT problem,** call the office (815) 744-4551 Monday through Friday during regular office hours or report to an emergency room.

#### **Follow-up**

- You should already have your post-operative appointment scheduled; this should be scheduled for 10-14 days after your surgery date. Please call the office with any questions or to confirm your appointment at (815) 741-5200.

### HOME EXERCISES:

Begin the day after surgery. Perform 3-4 x a day.

#### Scapular Retractions



Sitting with good posture. Gently bring scapular blades together. Hold 10 seconds. 15-20 times. 3-4 x a day



Ice shoulder 15-20 min. to reduce swelling. 3-4 x a day.

#### Active Elbow Range of Motion



Standing or sitting with sling off. Gently bend the elbow up (hand toward your shoulder) and then straighten your elbow (hand toward your side). Do 30 repetitions. Repeat exercise 5-6 times, 3-4 times per day.

**Biceps precautions: No straightening past 90 degrees for 3 weeks (we will inform you if this is the case)**



#### Washing:

This position will allow you to clean under your arm.

1. Gently remove your surgical arm from the sling and let it dangle in front of your body (PENDULUM exercise).
2. Lean your trunk towards the surgical shoulder while keeping your involved arm slightly in front of body. Use a damp washcloth to clean the area.

### Dressing:

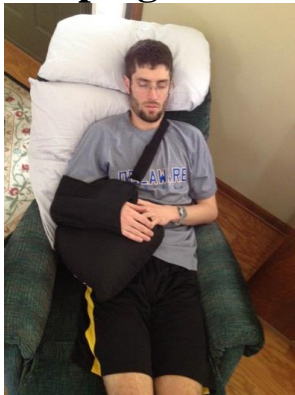


(Note: right arm is the surgical arm)

1. A button-down shirt will be the easiest to put on and take off.
2. **Remember to rest the surgical arm at your side while** the uninvolved arm will do the work.
3. Pull the sleeve up on the resting surgical arm and over the surgical shoulder.
4. Reach behind your back and place the uninvolved arm into the sleeve
5. Pull the shirt up and over the uninvolved shoulder.
6. Button the shirt with the uninvolved hand.



### Sleeping:



It may be more comfortable to sleep in a reclined position after surgery. This can be accomplished by sleeping on a few pillows or sleeping in a recliner chair as seen above.