



## **POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS: TOTAL SHOULDER ARTHROPLASTY**

### **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.
- Please supplement with iron by taking 325mg twice a day for 30 days after surgery.

### **Wound Care**

- You can remove the outer layer of dressings (Medipore tape/padding and Mepilex foam dressing) 4 days after surgery. After that, you are permitted to shower. Please keep the incision dry until your first appointment by using waterproof or impermeable dressings.
- You will have an incision that is closed with either staples or a Prineo/Exofin dressing under the Mepilex dressing (if applicable). If closed with staples, please keep the staples covered with a bandage. If a Prineo/Exofin is present the incision does not need to be covered but you can do so for your own comfort or at your own discretion. Please do not remove the Prineo/Exofin. If the edges do loosen, they can be trimmed as needed.
- 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.
- If a wound vac is present, we will provide you with additional instructions upon discharge from the hospital. Wound vacs are typically placed on the skin for a duration of 7 days; future changes and canister replacements will be coordinated by our office.

### **DVT Prevention**

- You must wear your white TED hose compressive stockings for 4 weeks after surgery. These stockings reduce swelling which improves healing and helps to prevent blood clots.
- Please perform ankle pumps as this will also help to prevent blood clots.



- You will be required to take medication to help prevent blood clots; these prescriptions were provided to you after surgery and should be filled at your pharmacy. Usually our recommendation is 4 weeks of Eliquis taken twice daily. If you have a personal or family history of DVT/pulmonary embolism or have other risk factors elevating your risk for thromboembolic events we may have alternative medications to prescribe to you: if this is the case, please let us know and refer to those updated instructions.
- 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.

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

- Your sling is to be worn AT ALL TIMES, this includes while sleeping at night. The only time you are permitted to remove your sling is to get dressed and for hygiene purposes.
- You cannot bear any weight to your surgical extremity. This means no lifting, reaching, or picking up any items. You are permitted to use a stress ball to squeeze your fingers.
- 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.
- You will not be permitted to drive for 6-8 weeks after surgery.
- 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. Begin them the day after surgery.
- Arrangements for formal physical therapy 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.

### **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. These medications 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.
- The narcotic pain medication can cause constipation if you take it regularly. Some treatments include prescribed stool softeners, 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.

**\*\*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.

### **Prophylaxis for Future Procedures**

- Please refrain from any dental work or colonoscopies for **3 months** after having a total joint replacement unless emergent. Please call our office if this is the case.
- **You will need to take antibiotics before colonoscopies and all dental work including fillings, caps, extractions, and cleanings for life after your joint replacement.**
- Please call our office one week prior to your planned procedure so we can call in appropriate antibiotics for you to take prior to your dental work or colonoscopy.

### **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.
- A 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 are signs of a possible blood clot and you may need to report to an Emergency Room or call 911.
- **If you have any other URGENT problem, call the office 714-850-7300. You will be transferred to the answering service and the on call physician if it is outside of normal business hours. If you are concerned that you have a life-threatening condition or emergency, DO NOT CALL THE OFFICE; call 911 immediately.**

### **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 714-850-7300

## HOME EXERCISES

### Pre-Operative Exercises



Sitting on chair that has wheels. Place surgical forearm on table, 45 deg. from midline in diagonal plane; roll chair back until you feel a gentle stretch in shoulder. Perform 15 x. each time trying to progress stretch. 3-4 times a day. (Stop short of pain)

### Post-Operative Exercises



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



Ice shoulder 15-20 min. to reduce swelling. 3-4 x/ day. Use towel under ice pack to protect skin.



### **Washing:**

This position will allow you to clean under your arm.

1. Gently remove your arm from the sling and let it dangle in front of your body.
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.