

Post-Operative Instructions

PROCEDURE: Shoulder Arthroscopy

PHYSICIAN: Matt Driscoll, MD

When to Call

Notify Dr. Driscoll's office if any of the following symptoms occur:

- Temperature of 101°F or greater
- Color or temperature change in the affected extremity other than bruising
- Increased redness or drainage from your wounds (note, it *is normal* to see reddish/pink drainage on your dressing during the first 3-4 days following arthroscopic surgery as the surgical fluid drains out of the joint)
- Numbness or tingling in the affected extremity (after your nerve block wears off, if applicable)
- Increasing or unrelenting pain
- Any other questions or concerns. We are here to help!

Pain

- It is normal to have pain after surgery. Take your pain pills as needed as prescribed.
- If you receive a nerve block injection before surgery, we recommend that you take your pain medication about 6-8 hours after your surgery to address pain that you may feel as the initial block begins to wear off.
- If you receive a pain catheter that remains in place after surgery, the anesthesiology team will contact you daily to assess your pain control and instruct you regarding dosing adjustments and removal of the catheter.
- Take with food to avoid nausea.
- You may gradually wean to Tylenol Extra Strength as needed. Most patients no longer regularly require the narcotic pain relievers after 5-7 days.

Diet

- The medicines used for anesthesia can cause temporary nausea after surgery.
- We suggest that you begin light with clear liquids or soft foods (such as Jello®, pudding or yogurt) the first day after surgery to minimize upset stomach.
- Drink at least 6 to 8 glasses of water daily.
- If nausea persists after the first day, contact our clinic and we may prescribe a medication for this.

Dressing Care

- Keep your dressing clean and dry at all times.
- You may remove the bandages after 2 days. Replace them with clean gauze bandages or Band-Aids® as needed for drainage or spotting.
- Do not remove or pick at the Steri-strips® (butterfly bandages). They will begin to fall off on their own after a few showers.

Icing

- Ice helps minimize swelling, pain, and inflammation.
- Use an ice pack or cooling device as often as possible - at least 30 minutes, 4 times each day.
- Do not apply to bare skin. Use a towel or washcloth between ice and your skin.
- Cooling/icing units for the shoulder are available for purchase on Amazon for about \$160 (Search: Ossur Cold Rush Cold Therapy System). These can be helpful with pain and inflammation the first few days after surgery, reducing the need for narcotic pain medication. Unfortunately, they are not covered by insurance.

Shoulder Sling

- You may have been provided with a shoulder sling to help support your arm after surgery.
- Unless otherwise instructed by Dr. Driscoll, you are allowed to remove your sling only for the following activities:
 - Bathing
 - Dressing
 - Physical therapy (or home exercises if instructed to do so)
 - While at rest in a safe environment

Sleeping

- Most patients find it helpful to sleep in a semi-upright position for a period of time after shoulder arthroscopy.
- If you have a recliner, we suggest trying this.
- Otherwise, try using several pillows to prop your torso up 30°

Bathing

- Keep the wounds dry for the first 2 days after surgery.
- After 2 days you may resume normal showers. Let water run over your wound but do not soak the wound underwater in a bathtub, hot tub or swimming pool.

- Cleanse the wounds with soap and water. Do not scrub. Pat the wounds dry afterwards with a clean, dry cloth. Allow wounds to dry open to the air before placing new bandages if necessary.
- Please do not apply any lotions, ointments, or gels to the wound.

Restrictions & Driving

- Avoid making important decisions for 24-48 hours after surgery.
- NO alcohol for 24 hours after surgery or while taking pain medications.
- NO driving while taking prescription narcotic pain medication.
- NO driving until your reaction time is normal and you are safe on the road.

Physical Therapy

- Depending on your shoulder condition, physical therapy may begin shortly after surgery or after a few weeks of early recovery.
- If you were given a prescription and protocol for physical therapy prior to surgery, please make an appointment to start your treatments within the first week after surgery.
- The therapists will follow the protocol you have been given for your specific injury and guide you in your recovery.
- If you were not given a prescription before surgery, this will be addressed at a post-operative visit with Dr. Driscoll

Post-op Appointment

- You should have an appointment to see Dr. Driscoll within 1-2 weeks following your surgery.

If you have any questions or concerns that are not addressed here, do not hesitate to call. We are here to help!

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