

Shoulder Arthroscopy: Postoperative Instructions

Please read and follow these instructions so that we can help you recover smoothly from your shoulder surgery. Failure to follow these instructions may compromise the outcome of your healing.

Medications

You should be given a prescription for pain medicine upon discharge home.

- Percocet: Take 1-2 tablets every 4-6 hours as needed for pain
- Norco: Take 1-2 tablets every 4-6 hours as needed for pain
- Aspirin 325mg: Take 1 tablet every 12 hours for 2 weeks
- Ibuprofen 200mg: Take 3 over the counter tablets every 8 hours for 48 hours
- Other: _____
- DO NOT** take NSAIDS (Ibuprofen, Motrin, Naproxen) for 6 weeks post-operatively

Activity

Minimize your activity the day of surgery. Avoid strenuous activities, until cleared by your doctor. Take 10 deep breaths and cough every hour to prevent pneumonia.

Sleeping in a more upright position (i.e. recliner) might be more comfortable initially. Place a pillow behind the elbow while lying down or sleeping.

Open and close your hand, flex and extend your wrist and elbow 10 times each hour that you are awake.

Ambulate as tolerated today and increase over the next few days, this is to prevent clots from forming in your legs. Report calf tenderness to your doctor.

- Begin small, gentle circular motions with the arm dangling in an extended position as tolerated. You should perform this 30 times clockwise and 30 times counterclockwise, 5 times per day.
- DO NOT** flex or extend your elbow for 4 weeks.
- DO NOT** actively (on your own) lift your operative arm away from the side of your body or rotate your arm away from your body until instructed by your surgeon or therapist for _____ weeks.

- You have been given a cooling unit to ice your shoulder. Apply cold therapy as demonstrated for at least 4 days following surgery, use 30 minutes at a time every hour for the first 8 hours, then as needed for 30 minutes at a time. Do not let the ice pad directly touch your skin. **DO NOT** use heat.

Diet

You should resume your regular diet as tolerated

Other Instructions

Do not smoke. Smoking severely impairs the healing of skin, soft tissue and bone. Smoking (nicotine) significantly increases surgery failure and wound healing complications.

Sling

- Use a sling until the nerve block wears off and then discontinue
- Use a sling at all times and while sleeping until your next office visit, for _____ weeks.

Dressing

Keep the dressing clean and dry.

You can expect some light wound seepage or drainage through the bandage. **DO NOT BE ALARMED**. Fluid seepage is normal. If the dressing does get soaked, remove and replace with dry gauze and an ace wrap. **NEVER** remove paper tapes (steri-strips) or your sutures.

- Remove the dressing 72 hours after surgery. **NEVER** remove paper tapes (steri-strips) or your sutures. You should apply a Band-Aid over each incision after removing the dressing.
- Other:

Showering

- You may shower the night of surgery unless told otherwise. It's okay to let soapy water wash over the knee but **DO NOT** soak it and **DO NOT** rub the incision. After showering, reapply new band-aids or gauze pads, and an ace wrap or brace if applicable.

Arthroscopic Findings

- Rotator Cuff: Intact Partial Tear Full tear

- Bone Spur (Acromion)
 - Shoulder Joint Arthritis
 - Acromioclavicular Joint Arthritis
 - Joint Lining Inflammation (Synovitis)
 - Labrum (Cartilage) Tear: Anterior Superior Posterior
 - Biceps Tendon Tear/Inflammation
 - Other:
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Procedures Performed

- Arthroscopic Joint Evaluation
 - Rotator Cuff Debridement
 - Rotator Cuff Repair: **DO NOT** raise your arm away from your body for 4-6 weeks under your own power.
 - Subacromial Decompression (Spur Removal)
 - Labral Repair: Anterior Superior Posterior
 - Biceps tendon release/repair
 - Distal Clavicle Excision (removal of the tip of the collar bone)
 - Joint Debridement: Labrum Biceps Joint (Cartilage Surface)
 - Removal of loose body or bodies
 - Other:
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Physical Therapy

- You will be given a physical therapy prescription. Please call to begin physical therapy in the next 2-3 days.

- You will be given a physical therapy prescription when you are seen in the office for your first post-operative visit. You will start physical therapy 4 weeks after surgery.

- Formal physical therapy is not needed at this time.

Follow-Up

A follow-up appointment will be made for you before you leave the surgery center. Please make sure you knew the date and time of this appointment before you leave the hospital.



The usual post-operative period for wound/check/staple removal/suture removal is between 10-14 days depending on the site of the procedure.

Notify Us

Call if you are experiencing warning signs such as:

- Severe pain that is not reduced with elevation, ice and medication
- Fever above 101.5 degrees F
- Severe calf pain, shortness of breath, or chest pain
- Adverse reactions to the prescribed medications
- Severe pain uncontrolled by your pain medications
- Excessive bloody wound drainage

The Spine and Orthopedic Center is open Monday through Friday, 8:30AM-5:00PM.

- Main Office Number: (805) 563-3307
- Office Call Service: (805) 882-2000

If it is after-hours, you may call and/or proceed to the local Emergency Department.

I ACKNOWLEDGE AND AGREE TO THE ABOVE:

PATIENT/PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

If signed by someone other than patient, please state relationship: _____

RESPONSIBLE ADULT SIGNATURE: _____

Relationship to patient: _____