

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR DAY SURGERY – SHOULDER

1. Advance diet as tolerated – start with liquids and soft solids.
2. Take medication according to instructions on the bottle - if given antibiotics take them until finished.
3. Your arm will be heavy and numb from the nerve block. Be careful with your arm. Use a sling when on your feet. The block will generally wear off in 12-24 hours.
4. When sitting or lying you may remove the sling. To reduce swelling, you may elevate the hand and elbow, this may also help with pain. An ice pack or ice therapy unit may be applied for comfort.
5. Activity:
 - a. You may move the arm to pain tolerance. **NO LIFTING.**
 - b. Do not use exercise equipment unless otherwise instructed.
 - c. Rest the day of surgery; no exertional activity until seen by your doctor.
 - d. You may take the sling off when in bed or chair – place a pillow or two under the elbow for comfort.
6. Keep the incisions dry – cover with plastic to shower. “Press n’ Seal” works great.
7. Some surgical fluid, with small amounts of blood, normally comes out of the small surgical incisions. Reinforce the dressing with additional bandages as needed. It is normal for arthroscopy fluid to leak out of the surgical portals onto the bandage. After 48 hours you can remove the dressing and apply a band-aid or bandage over each incision (covering the suture). Do **not** remove the suture. If you are having home health care, the nurse will usually change the dressing. If you wish, we will change the dressing in the office at your 1st post-op visit and you may do nothing.
8. You should have a follow-up appointment in approximately 5-10 days.
9. Notify your doctor of any chills, fever (greater than 101°F), excessive drainage, chest pain, severe pain or numbness in the arm 24 hours after the procedure.
10. If home health care has been requested, they will contact you directly, IF IT HAS BEEN AUTHORIZED by your insurance.

11. Other instructions: _____

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SURGICAL INFORMATION - SHOULDER

FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS

After surgery, you will be seen in the office approximately 7-14 days following the operation. Please contact our office at (801) 797-8000 to set up that appointment.

MEDICATION

Following surgery, you will need pain medication. After most procedures, preventative antibiotics will also be prescribed. You will be given a paper prescription on the day of surgery to have filled on your way home from the facility.

ANESTHESIA

Surgery, of course, requires anesthesia so that you can be pain-free and comfortable during the operation. In most cases, your shoulder will be rendered numb by a special nerve block for 12- 24 hours following your operation. During this time period, you should be careful to protect your arm, as it will not have normal feeling. The nerve block wears off gradually, and as your shoulder awakens and you begin to feel pain in the shoulder, you should begin taking the pain medication to "stay ahead of the pain". It is very difficult to catch up with pain, if it becomes severe, rather it is preferable to take the medication and keep the pain under control ahead of time.

ICE

Following surgery, ice helps control both swelling and pain. It is strongly recommended that you apply ice around the dressings. Do not apply ice to skin for more than 10 minutes. You can use "ice gels" and "ice pads" without any restrictions. Keep the dressings dry.

SHOWERING

Following surgery, you may shower. However, you are requested to keep the surgical dressing and the surgical area dry. For shoulder surgery, this involves covering the area with plastic and taking care not to get water directly on the site of the dressing and surgical area.

YOUR INCISION

If you have had arthroscopic-only surgery, the dressings should come off 2-3 days following the operation. Band-aids should be placed over the portals. Do not remove the sutures. We will do that in the office. If you have an incision, typically a home nurse will change the bandages. Alternatively, the bandage may be changed in the office at the first follow-up appointment.

SURGICAL SKIN CLEANSER

At the time of surgery, your shoulder will be sterilely cleaned with a soap that contains adhesive. Some of this adhesive soap frequently will remain on your skin following the procedure. To remove this adhesive, it is recommended that you use nail polish remover (or acetone) as a solvent and then rinse the area carefully once the surgical adhesive soap is removed.

ACTIVITY

Following surgery you should "take it easy". Each person experiences pain and discomfort individually, and you will return to your activities gradually as pain and discomfort allows. You are discouraged from participating in any exercise or rigorous activities immediately following the surgery. The specific return to activities should be discussed with Dr. Davidson or his staff. Your arm has been placed in a sling, and this sling is for your comfort. You may take it off when you are sitting or resting.

HOME HEALTH CARE

In most cases, home care has been requested to provide you with in-home nursing and physical therapy. This home care is designed to replace care that previously was provided in the hospital when these surgeries were done as an in-patient. The nurses will usually change your bandages, monitor your vital signs. The physical therapist will institute motion, as they have been instructed. Unfortunately, to comply with the law, there is a large amount of paperwork involved, and these home care workers are required to obtain lengthy amounts of information, which may seem redundant to you. This is, in fact mandated by law upon them. If, at any time, you feel home care is no longer necessary, you are welcome to terminate the home care and explain such to the agency providing your care.

SLEEPING

Sleeping is very difficult following shoulder surgery. Many people describe sleeping in an easy chair as the best option for the first few nights. Alternately, other people prop their body and arm with extra pillows in bed. You may sleep either with or without the sling, whichever is easier for you. Typically patients are able to sleep on the surgical shoulder 6 to 8 weeks following surgery.

DRIVING

Resumption of driving is up to the patient. You may, of course, not drive while taking pain medication. Following shoulder surgery, most people resume driving 2-4 weeks following the operation.

CONTACTS WITH OUR OFFICE

During business hours, if you have any problems or questions, you may contact the office staff at our main number (801) 797-8000.

After hour's emergency only, you may contact our answering service (at our main number) and the provider on call will respond to the answering service.

Please complete the following exercises
2-3 times per day starting the day after surgery

Shoulder Pendulums



Keeping your affected arm totally relaxed, let it hang as shown. Move your body weight in a circular pattern in order to move your arm in a circle. Your arm should swing freely like a pendulum. Repeat for 5 minutes, alternating clockwise and counter-clockwise.

Elbow Pronation/Supination



Keeping your elbow at your side, rotate your forearm so your palm faces up toward the ceiling then down toward the floor. Repeat 15 times.

Elbow Flexion/Extension



Keeping your elbow at your side with your palm facing the ceiling, bring your hand up toward your shoulder, then down toward the floor. Try to get your arm all the way straight when moving down toward the floor. Repeat 15 times.