



# Post-Operative Instructions Following Arthroscopy Of The Shoulder With Rotator Cuff Repair

**Diet:** You have no restrictions on your diet. During the evening following surgery drink plenty of fluids and eat a light supper.

**Nausea:** The anesthesia may produce some nausea. If you feel nauseated stay in bed, keep your head down and try drinking fluids such as 7-up, tea, soup or other clear liquids.

**Discomfort:** The amount of pain you can expect is very unpredictable. If you have pain that cannot be controlled with the prescription that you have been given you should notify your physician. Typically, two medications will be given for post-operative pain. The first will be a pain medication for stronger pain, such as Mepergan Forits, and the second will be for milder pain, such as Darvocet. These may be alternated and should be taken on an as needed basis but no closer than 4 hours together.

**Activity:** You will be placed in a shoulder sling with abduction pillow after your surgery. This must be worn at all times for at least 6 weeks following surgery unless instructed otherwise. You may only remove the sling while showering or brief periods during the day only to straighten your elbow.

**Ice:** You will be given refreezable ice packs to take home to use following your surgery. Also you will be given extra refreezable ice packs so one may be kept on the shoulder and one in the freezer at all times. It is very important to use ice every hour for 20 minutes at a time to help with the pain and swelling following your surgery especially during the first week. Ice is good to use at any time during your recovery if you feel your shoulder is still swollen.

**Physical Therapy:** You will begin Physical Therapy 2-3 days after your surgery. On the day of your surgery you will be given a prescription for therapy that you will need to take with you to your first visit. The nurse that discharges you will make your first Physical Therapy appointment and your follow up appointment to see Dr. Powell. The therapist will change your dressing and begin teaching you specific exercises to begin your recovery.

**Dressing:** The dressing should remain in place until you are seen at Physical Therapy. The

**Absolutely no  
narcotics will  
be dispensed  
after-hours,  
on weekends  
or on holidays.**



incisions may continue to drain small amounts of fluid which is common for the first several days. You may need to use a dry dressing until the wounds have stopped draining and are completely dry. You will see Dr. Powell or his nurse at 2 weeks following surgery to have your sutures trimmed.

**Bathing:** It is necessary to keep your dressing dry and intact to help prevent infection. You may sponge bathe for the first several days but you need to keep your incision site dry for the first 2 weeks or until your sutures have been trimmed. At this time you may begin showering and will be allowed to get the incision site wet.

### **Call Your Physician Immediately If You:**

- Experience chest pain, with or without deep breathing.
- Experience pain in your arm or arms that does not seem to be related to your surgery.
- Notice that your surgical site is excessively cool to the touch, is dusky in color or has numbness and tingling.
- Develop a temperature of 102° F. or higher, or start to have chills.
- Notice that the affected arm is becoming more swollen, warm, red and painful.
- Have significant bright red bleeding from the incision.
- Have discomfort (pain) that is not relieved by prescribed medication.

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If you have any problems or questions, please feel free to call our office at (479) 582-4647 between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday – Friday. If you have an emergency outside of our normal office hours, go to the nearest emergency room or call (479) 433-6116.