



Shoulder Arthroscopy Discharge Instructions

Wound Care

- Keep dressings clean and dry.
- You may remove dressings in 48 hours. You may shower, get incisions wet **5 days** after surgery. After showering, pat dry and place Band-Aids or small dressings at each site. If steri-strips are present, leave in place (for 10-14 days).
- **DO NOT SOAK** your shoulder (i.e pool, hot tub) for **2 months**.

Pain and Swelling

- You will be given a cooling unit which helps **tremendously** with post-op pain/swelling.
- If no unit was dispensed, ice frequently. Cover your shoulder with a thin sheet or towel & ice for 20 minutes, 4-5 times/day.
- Your nerve block should effectively control/minimize pain for 12-16 hrs post-op.
- Take pain meds as directed, wean as tolerated. Pain meds cause constipation, take with a stool softener such as Colace or Senekot.
- You may take NSAIDS or anti-inflammatory medication (i.e Advil, Aleve), unless otherwise directed.

Weight-Bearing Activity

- Wear a sling at all times, including with sleep. It is ok to remove sling during PT, showers and getting dressed. Initially, it's often easier to sleep in a reclined position
- Use of sling and any other restrictions, depending on procedure/s performed:
 - For **SUBACROMIAL DECOMPRESSION ONLY**: You may remove the sling to perform the provided exercises .
 - For a **BICEPS TENODESIS**: NO active elbow flexion for 4 weeks after surgery (passive flexion is OK).
 - For a **ROTATOR CUFF REPAIR**: Keep the arm in the sling until the follow-up visit.

- Avoid lifting anything heavier than a coffee mug until cleared by your doctor or therapist.
- You may return to work/school as discussed with your doctor, usually when pain is tolerable. This will be between 5-10 days, perhaps longer depending on job requirements. Your sling should be in place at work for 4 weeks.

Post-Op Exercises*

1. **Hand Pumps:** Begin post-op. With arm in sling, squeeze foam ball (or open & close fist) 15 times. Rest & repeat, 4-5 times/day.
2. **Elbow/wrist motion:** Flex/extend wrist as tolerated. Remove sling (as tolerated) 2 times/day to work on elbow range of motion (*unless you had a biceps tenodesis, see above*).

*Refer to additional **Instruction Sheet** with Exercises to gradually begin in 1st week after surgery (*unless you had a rotator cuff repair, see above*).

Emergencies

Contact the office or doctor on call 24 hours/day at **925-939-8585** if you note any of the following:

- Unrelenting or worsening pain, swelling, or numbness.
- Fever/chills (Temp > 101.5°). A low grade fever is common the first few days after surgery.
- Redness or increasing warmth around incisions, continuous drainage/bleeding from incisions (small amount of drainage expected).
- Difficulty breathing or excessive nausea/vomiting.

If you have an emergency that requires immediate attention, proceed to the nearest emergency room.

Follow-up

- You should have your first post-op visit at **7-10 days**. If you don't have this scheduled, please call our office for assistance.
- No driving or operating heavy machinery while on narcotic pain medication!