



## **SHOULDER ARTHROSCOPY DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS**

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**(303) 321-1333 or**

**Toll free 1-888-900-1333 (outside Denver)**

[www.western-ortho.com](http://www.western-ortho.com)

- 1. Dressing:** You can change your surgical dressing 72 hours after surgery. Begin by removing the tape and all of the bulky padding. Keep all of the steri-strips in place over the incisions. This should remain in place until you return to our office for the first post-operative visit. If the steri-strips fall off, replace them with band-aids.
- 2. Showering:** Although the adhesive dressings are in place over the incision sites, you must still protect them from getting wet for the first 10 days. You may shower 72 hours after the surgery, using plastic wrap over the shoulder to protect the dressing. Generally, the incision sites may get directly wet in a shower at 10 days and submerged in a bathtub, pool or jacuzzi at 3 weeks after surgery.
- 3. Swelling:** The arthroscopic procedure involves filling up the shoulder joint with fluid. It is common to experience some swelling after surgery, but this fluid should be reabsorbed within the first few days after surgery. Ice can be used on your shoulder as often as you'd like, until the bulky dressing is removed. Then ice can be applied every 20 minutes at a time as often as needed for pain and swelling. It will be helpful to use ice following your exercises and physical therapy.
- 4. Sling/Brace:** If you were provided with a pillow sling, this should remain in place at all times other than for doing your exercises, bathing and dressing. It should remain in place until your physician tells you to discontinue its use.
- 5. Exercises:** Exercises are an important part of your recovery. You can start your exercises the day after surgery, depending on your comfort. It is important to release your forearm from the sling in order to do the wrist, elbow and shoulder exercises. Squeezing a small ball is a helpful way to alleviate swelling and stiffness of the wrist and fingers. If these exercises produce significant pain, stop the exercises and check with your physician. Do not drive until your first post operative visit. Length of driving limitations will be further discussed then and depends on side (right vs. left) and type of surgery. What motions you can do at your shoulder, elbow, and wrist will be discussed before you leave the surgery center.
- 6. Pain Medications:** You will be prescribed narcotic medication to be used after surgery at home. Keep in mind that narcotics will cause drowsiness and should not be used with alcohol. Also, taking these medications on an empty stomach can result in stomach upset. It is common to feel the most discomfort when lying down to sleep at night, so you may find it beneficial to take the pain pill at bedtime. If unusual side effects occur, please

discontinue the medication and contact our office. When additional refills are needed, please contact our office during business hours.

- 7. Signs of Infection:** With any surgery it is important to be aware of signs of infection which can include: unusual looking drainage (green/yellow), increased redness and tenderness around the incision site, or fever (101 degrees or above) and chills. It is a good idea to check the wound daily after the initial dressing change. Also, be aware of excessive bleeding, or prolonged numbness and tingling. Should any of these symptoms occur, contact our office as soon as possible. There is a physician on call 24 hours a day.
- 8. Post-Op Appointment:** Post-operative appointment is required 7 to 10 days after your surgery; this can be done by calling (303) 321-1333. Activity and physical therapy will be discussed at this time.
- 9. D.V.T. Prophylaxis:** Blood clots after shoulder arthroscopy are uncommon. Please wear TED stockings on both legs until 10 days post-op. Please take one (enteric coated aspirin) ECASA (325 mg) daily for 10 days post surgery. If you experience any signs or symptoms of D.V.T. such as leg swelling/pain, please notify us immediately. Any chest pain or shortness of breath is an emergency and please call 911.
- 10. Questions:** If you have any additional questions, please contact our office.

## SLING USE INSTRUCTION

You have been fitted for the Ultra-Sling for use after your surgery. You are to wear the sling 24 hours per day, including, while you are sleeping. The only time you may remove the sling is while you are showering or changing your clothes. Your doctor will instruct you when to stop wearing the sling.

## EXERCISES

Exercises and movement are important after surgery. Completing your exercises as listed will assist in helping to speed the healing process and return you to your regular activities.

The exercise ball attached to your sling is to be used throughout the day. Simply squeeze the ball with your hand repeatedly. This will help to decrease the swelling and pain.

Prior to beginning the exercises, **open the sling up**, then begin the following exercises which are to be done 20 to 30 times each; 3 to 4 times per day:

1. Shrug Shoulders: Move shoulder blades up, then back, then down.

2. Forearm Pronation/Supination: Rotate your forearm from a palm up to palm down Position and back again.

3. Elbow Flexion and Extension: Keeping the elbow at your side, lift your arm by bending the elbow, then straighten your elbow. **It is important to make sure you have removed your arm from the sling and you are moving your elbow to a fully bent position, then back to straight position.**

4. Wrist Circles: Supporting your forearm with the other hand, move your hand in a circle. Repeat this pattern in the clockwise direction and then in the counter-clockwise position.

**If you have any questions, Please contact our office at (303) 321-1333.**

