



## OrthoTeam Clinic

Ashish M. Rawal, M.D.

2 Science Court, Madison, WI 53711

900 Ridge Street, Stoughton, WI 53589.

Telephone: 608-231-3410 Fax: 608-231-3430

# Post-Op Instructions for Total Shoulder / Reverse Arthroplasty

## DIET

- Begin with clear liquids and light foods (Jell-O, soups, etc.)
- Progress to your normal diet if you are not nauseated

## WOUND CARE

- Wait until your first post-operative appointment to have Dr. Rawal's team remove the surgical dressing
- You have a water-proof dressing on your shoulder that allows you to shower immediately. The dressing does not need to be changed at home and will be removed at your first post-operative visit.
- It is normal to see some drainage on the dressing. The dressing itself will absorb drainage in order to keep your incision dry. If the dressing is to loosen or come off, please contact the office for a new dressing.
- Please do not place any ointments lotions or creams directly over the incisions.
- Once the dressing is removed **at the first post-operative visit** you can begin to get the incision wet in the shower (water and soap lightly run over the incision and pat dry)
- NO immersion in a bath until given approval by our office.

## MEDICATIONS

- Local anesthetics are injected into the wound on the shoulder and joint at the time of surgery. This will wear off within 12-24 hours and it is not uncommon for patients to encounter more pain on the first or second day after surgery when swelling peaks.
- Most patients will require some narcotic pain medication for a short period of time – this can be taken as per directions on the bottle.
- Common side effects of the pain medication are nausea, drowsiness, and constipation. To decrease the side effects take the medication with food. If constipation occurs, consider taking an over the counter laxative and be sure to drink plenty of water.
- If you are having problems with nausea and vomiting, contact the office to possibly have your medications changed.
- Do not drive a car or operate machinery while taking the narcotic medication or while in sling.
- Please avoid alcohol use while taking narcotic pain medication
- If you are having pain that is not being controlled by the pain medication prescribed, you may take an over the counter acetaminophen (Tylenol) as directed on the bottle. This will help to decrease pain and decrease the amount of narcotic medication required. **For 6 weeks following surgery take one Aspirin 81 mg tablet daily to lower the risk of developing a blood clot after surgery.** Please contact the office should severe calf pain occur or significant swelling of the calf or ankle occur.
- Please call if planning on having dental procedure done in the future as you will also need antibiotics prior to future dental procedures



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### ACTIVITY

- You are to wear the sling placed at surgery for a total of 6 weeks as described by Dr. Rawal. This includes sleeping and throughout the day
- If there are 24 hours a day, you should be in the sling 23.5 hours of the day. Removal for hygiene, dressing, and home exercise only.
- When sleeping or resting, inclined positions (ie: reclining chair) and a pillow under the forearm for support may provide better comfort **STILL IN SLING**
- Do not engage in activities which increase pain/swelling. Unless otherwise instructed the arm should remain in the sling at all times.
- Avoid long periods of sitting or long distance traveling for 2 weeks.
- **NO driving** until instructed otherwise by physician, it is **illegal to drive in a sling**
- May return to sedentary work **ONLY** or school 3-4 days after surgery, if pain is tolerable

### ICE THERAPY

- Icing is very important in the initial post-operative period and should begin immediately after surgery.
- Use icing machine continuously or ice packs (if machine not prescribed) for 30-45 minutes every 2 hours daily until your first post-operative visit
- Care should be taken with icing to avoid frostbite to the skin.
- You do not need to wake up in the middle of the night to change over the ice machine or icepacks unless you are uncomfortable

### EXERCISE

- Begin exercises (active elbow flexion/extension without resistance) 24 hours after surgery unless otherwise instructed.
- While maintaining your elbow by the side, begin elbow, hand, and wrist exercises immediately.
- Formal physical therapy (PT) typically begins 2-4 weeks following surgery.



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### **EMERGENCIES\*\***

- Contact our office at (608) 231-3410 if any of the following are present:
- Painful swelling or numbness (note that some swelling and numbness is normal)
- Unrelenting pain
- Fever (over 101° – it is normal to have a low grade fever for the first day or two following surgery) or chills
- Redness around incisions
- Color change in foot or ankle
- Continuous drainage or bleeding from incision (a small amount of drainage is expected)
- Difficulty breathing
- Excessive nausea/vomiting
- Calf pain
- If you have an emergency that requires immediate attention proceed to the nearest emergency room.

### **FOLLOW-UP CARE/QUESTIONS**

- If you do not already have a post-operative appointment scheduled, please contact our scheduler at 608-231-3410 to schedule.
- Your first post-operative appointment will be scheduled with one of the Physician Assistants for a wound check, physical therapy protocol and to answer any further questions you have regarding the procedure
- Typically the first post-operative appointment is made for 14 days following surgery for suture/staple removal.