



**THOMAS KREMEN, MD**

ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY AND SPORTS MEDICINE

UCLA DEPARTMENT OF ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY

(424) 259-9856 OFFICE

(424) 259-6599 FAX

## **Discharge Instructions after Open Shoulder Surgery** **Surgery: Greater tuberosity avulsion**

### Immobilization/brace:

- A Sling has been provided for you with an abduction pillow. This allows for the shoulder repair to heal in the appropriate position.
- Your Sling should be removed 3 times daily to perform range of motion exercises at the wrist, hand and elbow. No active shoulder motion until specifically instructed to do so by Dr. Kremen at your first post-operative visit.

### Medications:

- You have been given a prescription for pain medicine (example: norco, oxycodone or Percocet). This medication can cause constipation, thus taking a stool softener is recommended such as Colace, dulcolax or senakot. Use the pain medication as needed for the first few days, then begin to taper yourself off. You may take Tylenol (acetaminophen) in place of the narcotic medication, however this must be limited to less than 3500mg total per day. If you have liver disease then do not take Tylenol unless directed by your Liver doctor or primary care physician.
- DO NOT take ANY anti-inflammatory pain medications (examples: Advil, Motrin, Ibuprofen, Aleve, Naproxen, Naprosyn). These medicines can inhibit the healing of your shoulder repair.

### Other Instructions:

- DO NOT reach for anything, lift anything or drive until cleared by an orthopaedic surgeon.
- Especially avoid any external rotation and forward flexion/elevation of the shoulder, stay in the sling/immobilizer until directed otherwise by Dr. Kremen
- If you are a smoker, it is recommended that you refrain from smoking in the postoperative period. Smoking cigarettes or other substances will inhibit healing of

your shoulder repair. Nicotine gum is better than smoking cigarettes, however it still carries a risk of impaired healing.

- You may remove your dressing after 7 days after surgery and change it to a new sterile dressing. Tegaderm patches with sterile gauze or OPSITE dressings are the preferred dressing and can be worn in the shower, then changed.
- You may begin showering at 7 days after surgery. The incision should be covered with a Tegaderm or OPSITE dressing. The incision can get wet briefly but CANNOT be submerged under water (i.e. no pools, lakes, baths, etc.)
- Make sure your axilla (arm pit) is completely dry after showering.
- Pat yourself dry after showering, no scrapping or rubbing.
- DO NOT rub or scratch the incision.

## Constipation

The medications you have been prescribed for pain control can cause constipation in most people. This can be a problem. It may last as long as you are taking the medication. It is important to learn how to prevent and treat constipation. Some suggestions are included below:

1. Eat foods that have helped relieve constipation in the past
2. Eat foods high in fiber or roughage.
  - a. Fruits – fresh or dried fruits, especially those with skin or seeds (apples, pears, peaches, tomatoes, berries, raisins, and dates
  - b. Raw or cooked vegetables (not overcooked) - carrots, cabbage, peas, dry beans, lentils.
  - c. Cereals and flours – bran, whole wheat bread, rye bread and crackers, wheat beans, lentils
3. Drink prune juice
4. Sprinkle 1 – 2 tablespoons of unprocessed bran to you food.
5. Drink plenty of fluids - eight to ten 8-ounce glasses a day

If you experience any serious problems or concerning symptoms, please call our office at:

- Regular business hours: **424-259-9856**
- After hours/weekends: 310-206-6766 and ask to be connected with the doctor on call for the Sports Medicine Service.

## Warning Signs. Call the office if you notice any of the following symptoms:

- Chills or fever over 101° F.
- Bleeding or fluid draining from the incision more than 5 days after surgery.
- Foul smell/cloudy drainage from the operative site.
- New numbness or newly discovered inability to move a specific muscle
- Increased pain

- Wound edges opening (dehiscence)
- Excessive redness at the incision site or swelling/puffiness around the knee/incisions
- Increasing pain, particularly in your calf muscle
- If you experience significant chest pain or shortness of breath, please call 911 and/or go to your local emergency room immediately as this may represent a life-threatening emergency. Please call our office to keep us informed of any such events.

You have been prescribed a pain medication which has a number of side effects. Most common side effects are drowsiness, nausea and/or vomiting, itching, constipation and irritability. If these are prolonged or severe, your pain medication may need to be changed. You must contact the office during regular business hours to have a new prescription written. **Most narcotics cannot be prescribed over the phone. If you need a prescription refilled call 424-259-9856 and have your pharmacy fax the refill request to (424) 259-6599.** Please allow 48 hours for this to be completed. After hours (after 5:00 PM or weekends), the on-call physician will not refill a prescription or call in a new pain medication prescription.

**Please call 424-259-9856 to make a follow up appointment or to confirm that you already have a follow up appointment scheduled. You should be seen by Dr. Kremen approximately 10 to 14 days after surgery.**