



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: Total shoulder replacement

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.
- For questions regarding correct application of the sling, please refer to the FAQ section of my website: <https://www.kremensportsmedicine.com/>
- Your Sling should be removed 3 times daily to perform PASSIVE (use your good arm to move your surgery arm) range of motion exercises at your elbow and active range of motion at your wrist and fingers.
- There is no active motion recommended until told to do so by Dr. Kremen.
- You should not move the shoulder joint for about 3 weeks after surgery. That means NO ACTIVE or PASSIVE range of motion either on your own or with physical therapy.
- Do not externally rotate or extend your shoulder and do not reach behind your back. Maintain your arm in the sling until directed to start physical therapy by Dr. Kremen.

Medications:

- You have been given a prescription for pain medicine (example: norco or oxycodone). 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 4000mg total per day. If you have liver disease then do not take Tylenol unless directed by your liver doctor or primary care physician.
- It is NOT recommended to take both narcotic pain medicine and sleep aid medications.

- DO NOT take ANY anti-inflammatory pain medications (examples: Advil, Motrin, Ibuprofen, Aleve, Naproxen, Naprosyn, Meloxicam, Mobic). These medicines can interfere with your shoulder repair and your aspirin medication.
- If you do not already take aspirin or another anti-platelet agent (example: Plavix, clopidogrel), I recommend taking one 325mg aspirin daily for 6 weeks after surgery. Do not take aspirin if you have an allergy to aspirin or are already on an anticoagulant medication (blood thinner such as coumadin, warfarin, enoxaparin, Plavix, clopidogrel, xarelto, rivaroxaban, Eliquis, apixaban, Pradaxa, dabigatran, Savaysa edoxaban, etc.). This is to help prevent blood clots.

Other Instructions:

- DO NOT reach for anything, lift anything or drive until cleared by an orthopaedic surgeon.
- 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 small risk of impaired healing.
- It is recommended that you keep your dressing on until seen for follow up by Dr. Kremen. However, you may, if necessary, remove your dressing 5 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. Call Dr. Kremen's office if you have any concern with the wound or dressing.
- It is recommended that you not shower until the sutures are removed at your first follow up visit. Over the counter disposable cleaning wipes can be helpful for hygiene during this time frame and it is OK to remove your sling briefly for hygiene purposes. However, if you must shower, you may begin showering at 5 days after surgery. You may remove your sling in order to shower. The incision should be covered with a Tegaderm or OPSITE dressing when showering, if possible. 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.
- DO NOT rub or scratch the incision.
- Do not have the stream of water be directed onto the wound, however, water running over the wound covered with tegaderm is OK.
- Icing your shoulder is permitted. Do not place ice or cooling device directly onto exposed skin, cover your skin with a cloth or a towel. You can ice the desired area for 20 minutes out of every hour. Constant ice application is not recommended.
- Remember that it is **recommended you take antibiotics** (usually amoxicillin 2grams orally, unless you have an allergy to this type of medication) 1 hour prior to any procedure in the future (ex. Dental work, toenail removal, etc.).

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
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

Warning Signs. Call Dr. Kremen's 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, dizziness 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.

If you have an urgent issue such as one of the warning signs above and it is after normal business hours or on a weekend, please call 310-206-6766 and ask to be connected with the doctor on call for the Sports Medicine Service.

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.