



Post-Operative Instructions for Shoulder Arthroscopy – Rotator Cuff Repair with Tenodesis

DIET

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

MEDICATIONS

Prescribed Narcotics:

- This medication may be taken as needed for pain as directed on the bottle.
- Do not drive or drink alcohol while taking this medication.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol)/OTC Anti-inflammatory medication (Ibuprofen or Aleve)

- This medications may be taken as needed.
- Please use as directed on the bottle.
- Do not exceed 4,000 mg of Acetaminophen in a 24 hour period.

Blood thinner:

- Please take blood thinner as directed. Most patients are prescribed a daily Aspirin for two weeks after surgery. It is important to take as prescribed to help prevent blood clots.

Stool softener:

- We recommend picking up an over the counter stool softer such as MiraLax, as a common side effect of narcotic pain medication is constipation.
- It is normal to take several days to make a bowel movement after surgery.
- Drink plenty of clear liquids as the anesthesia can cause dehydration/constipation as well.

WOUND CARE

- Maintain your operative dressing after surgery. Swelling and minor bleeding are normal after surgery.
- If you notice that there is blood showing through the dressing, please reinforce with additional dressings as needed.
- Remove surgical dressing on the second post-operative day. You may begin to shower the area at this point. Gently wash and rinse the area as tolerated and pat dry. Band-Aids or a clean dressing should be applied and changed daily. The skin sutures will be removed at your first post-operative visit.
- If a separate biceps tenodesis incision was made along the front of the shoulder, it should be covered as well. Skin glue was used to aid close this separate incision, so it is normal for the glue to be sticky or flake off over time.
- NO immersion in a bath until given approval by our office.

ACTIVITY

- Physical Therapy to start 2 weeks after surgery.
- You are to wear the sling placed at surgery for around 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 for 2 weeks, as well as while you are taking narcotics, and until you are able to react in an emergency situation
- May return to sedentary work **ONLY** or school 3-4 days after surgery, if pain is tolerable.

NERVE BLOCK

- You most likely received a nerve block in your arm that helps with pain control after surgery. This nerve block may still be working for a few days after surgery. The numbness/tingling may wear off slowly, or all at once. Some people experience the numbness wearing off in certain parts of the arm/hand/fingers before it completely resolves.

IMMOBILIZER (if prescribed)

- Your sling should be worn at all times (except for hygiene).
- Keep your elbow against the pillow and in front of your body at all times to minimize stress on the repair.
- Keep a pillow behind the elbow when lying down to prevent the elbow from sliding backwards.

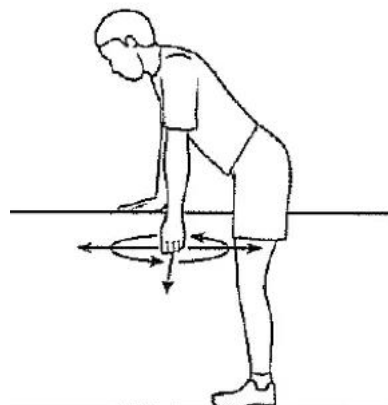
ICE THERAPY

- Icing is very important in the initial post-operative period and should begin immediately after surgery.
- You may use the ice machine for 2 hours on, then remove for two hours during the day until your first post-operative visit. Care should be taken with icing to avoid frostbite to the skin. **DO NOT PLACE ICE PACK / PAD DIRECTLY ON SKIN.**
- Icing should not be performed while sleeping.

EXERCISE

- Begin exercises (pendulums-see below- and passive elbow flexion and active 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 after you are seen at your first post operative appointment 2 weeks after surgery. A prescription and protocol will be provided.

Pendulum Exercise:





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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
- Color change in distal arm and/or hand
- 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 or if you need to change the appointment, 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 10-14 days following surgery for suture removal if you have any sutures in place.