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## **Shoulder Arthroscopy Post-Operative Instructions**

### **Initial Instructions**

- Ice along with pain medicine are your keys to initial pain management.
- After you arrive home, rest the remainder of the day. You may be tired or nauseated from the anesthesia and/or pain medication.
- You will be in a sling following surgery. Remain in this until your next appointment.

### **Dressing Change**

- Leave the dressing in place for 48 hours following surgery.
- After this, remove the dressing making sure to leave the steri-strip tape on the incisions in place.
  - The steri strips will stay in place for 1 ½ to 2 weeks before falling off on their own.
- You may now apply a new, clean, dry dressing at least once a day.
  - Place sterile bandages over the incisions.
- It is extremely important to keep the surgical site clean and dry at all times to help prevent infection.
- Signs of infection include redness, swelling, increased pain, warmth, fever (above 101.4 degrees F) and drainage from the wound. If you note any of these signs, please call the office immediately at 713-486-1820.

### **Bathing**

- You may shower 48 hours after your surgery and get your incisions wet.
  - Let the water run down over the incisions but do not rub or scrub them.
- Do not soak or submerge the surgical site for at least 3 weeks following surgery.
- To wash underarm area, lean forward and let arm dangle in front of you.

### **Activity**

- Rest for the first 24 hours.
- Remain in the sling except for showering or working on range of motion of the elbow and wrist.
  - You are encouraged to move the wrist and elbow on the surgical side several times a day to avoid stiffness.
- The first 4 weeks will be very slow moving in regards to progressing motion of the shoulder.
  - Avoid doing any activity not specifically demonstrated by your physical therapist or physician.
- The clinical staff will arrange formal physical therapy as needed.

## Cryotherapy

- Icing is very important to decrease swelling and pain, and improve mobility.
- You will be provided with a cryocuff.
  - Keep cold therapy cuff on at all times for the first 24 hours after surgery.
  - Refill with cold water every hour while awake.
  - After 24 hours, continue to use the cuff 3-4 times a day, 15-20 minutes each time.
  - Be sure to keep clothing or a towel between ice and skin, as placing the ice directly on skin may cause frostbite. **DO NOT PLACE DIRECTLY ON SKIN.**
- If a cryocuff is not provided, please use ice for 20 minutes each over surgical site. **DO NOT PLACE DIRECTLY ON SKIN.**

## Medications

- You will be given a narcotic pain medication. This should be taken as needed every 4-6 hours for pain. Take with a little food.
- If given a prescription for an anti-inflammatory, such as Naproxen or Motrin, take as directed. Take with food.
- We recommend purchasing an over-the-counter stool softener (such as Colace) to take as directed while taking narcotics to prevent constipation.

## Post-Op Office Appointment

- If the appointment was not arranged prior to surgery, please contact the office at 713-486-1820.

## Emergencies or Concerns

- Contact us at 713-486-1820 or go to the nearest emergency room.
  - Pain worsens or does not go away after pain medication is taken.
  - Redness or swelling in your thigh or calf or operative arm that will not decrease.
  - Difficulties moving your fingers or toes.
  - Develop a fever greater than 101.4 degrees.
- Please note that refills on pain medication will not be approved during evenings or on weekends.