

POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Total Shoulder Surgery

Medication

Pain Medication: You will be given a prescription of pain medication prior to leaving the hospital. You may take an over the counter anti-inflammatory medication (Ibuprofen or Advil, up to 600mg up to 3 times daily) after surgery in addition to your pain medication, unless you have a history of stomach ulcers. If you are not taking pain medication, you can still take an anti-inflammatory medication for inflammation, pain and swelling.

Aspirin: You should take 1 regular strength Aspirin (325mg) daily for 1 month postoperatively in place of 1 dose of anti-inflammatory medication to decrease your risk of blood clots. If you are currently on any blood thinning medications (Coumadin, Warfarin, etc.) or have a medical condition where you cannot take this medication, you will need to discuss this prior to surgery.

Bathing

You may bathe 48 hours after your surgery. Keep the incision site and bandages covered while showering (waterproof dressings are available at the Durable Medical Equipment area at the front of the Roxbury clinic building). Apply clean band-aids after. You may NOT get your incision sites wet until 48 hours after your stitches or staples are removed.

Dressing

It is normal for there to be drainage and for the dressing to become blood tinged. You may change your surgical dressing after 48 hours. You can take all the padding off, but keep the incisions covered with either band-aids or sterile gauze.

Icing

Ice your shoulder as much as possible in the first 72 hours after surgery. After the first 3 days, you should ice for 20 minutes three to four times daily as needed for pain and swelling.

You may be supplied with an ice cooler at your pre-operative appointment or from the hospital. You can use this as much as tolerated for the first 72 hours after surgery. After 3 days, you may use the cooler for 20 minutes three to four times daily. Do not apply the pad of the ice cooler directly to your skin.

Sling

You will be fitted with a sling at your pre-operative appointment. Bring this with you to surgery. Wear the sling at all times except for hand, wrist and elbow exercises 3 times daily, which you may begin the day after surgery.

(Over)

Activity

You are encouraged to walk in a controlled environment in order to avoid prolonged sitting.

No driving until instructed by your physician, typically at 4 weeks postoperatively. Sleeping may be performed in a reclining chair or bed with the use of pillows to support the operative site as tolerated.

Physical Therapy

You will need to begin Physical Therapy 7-10 days after your surgery. You will receive a prescription for your therapy at your first post-operative appointment. Physical therapy is typically 2-3 times per week, but may vary depending on your specific surgery.

Continuous Passive Motion Machine

If you require a CPM unit, one will be delivered to your home for use 4-6 weeks post-operatively. You should begin using the CPM machine after surgery for 4-6 hours daily with as much range of motion as tolerated. You should increase your range of motion 5-10 degrees daily.

Post Operative Appointment

Your post operative appointment will be 10-14 days after your surgery. Your staples/stitches will be removed at this appointment.

Emergencies

If at any time you have questions or emergent concerns, contact Dr. Whitehurst, or his physician assistant Francie Kelso, PA-C at (815-398-9491).

If you are calling after hours or over a weekend you will be directed to the physician answering service and you may be called by the physician or physician assistant on call.

Please call if any of the following arise:

- * Fever over 101 (it is normal to have a low grade fever for the first 1-2 days after surgery)
- * Redness
- * Painful swelling
- * Numbness
- * Shortness of breath
- * Excessive bleeding and/or drainage from incision sites.

If you require immediate attention, go to the nearest emergency room.

If you have any questions, please call Ashley or Rose at 815-484-6958.

After hours, please call 815-398-9491.