
Post-op Instructions for Shoulder Capsulotomy & Manipulation

These instructions are to compliment the information given by the surgeon, the nursing staff and the physical therapists. They cover many of the common questions.

Wound Care

- Dressings are to be kept clean and dry. Change the dressing daily starting 2 days after surgery. After removing the old dressing replace with gauze pads and secure with tape or apply band aids until seen back in the office. A small amount of clear drainage or bleeding is normal.
- You may get the incision wet when showering 2 days after surgery. The shower should be brief and the wound patted dry with a clean towel. No baths or soaking the incision until 3-4 weeks after surgery and incisions are completely healed over.
- If you develop purulent drainage (thick white or greenish in color) from the wound, increasing redness, or a temperature of 101, please report these symptoms to your surgeon or the doctor on call.

Pain

- Ice your shoulder as frequently as possible. We recommend 4-5 times per day for 20 minutes per time. You may use either the ice bag/cooling device given to you at the hospital or simply place ice in a zip lock bag, wrap it in a towel, and place it on the shoulder. Do not apply ice or the cooling device directly to the skin as it may cause damage to the skin if left on for long periods of time.
- Narcotic pain medication will be prescribed for use, if needed, after you leave the hospital in limited amounts. Try to wean down/off as soon as you are able. Use acetaminophen (Tylenol) and/or anti-inflammatories (Ibuprofen or Aleve) as main medications for pain control as/if appropriate. Add the narcotic medication for additional pain control if needed. It can help to stagger your pain medications. If a refill of medication is needed, please call the office during regular business hours, Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. In general, refills will not be made after hours or on weekends as they need to be picked up. Please plan ahead.
- Also narcotic medications can cause constipation so you may want/need to use an over the counter stool softeners/laxatives as needed.

Driving

- To drive you must no longer be taking narcotic pain pills (plain Tylenol is allowed). Also, you must feel strong and alert.

Exercises

- Upon discharge from the hospital you must aggressively work on maintaining your shoulder range-of-motion by performing the shoulder exercises daily shown to you by the physical therapist. You are also encouraged to perform hand, wrist and elbow range of motion exercises 4-5 times per day. You will likely be set up with physical therapy in the first 1-2 days after surgery.
- Your physician will likely refer you to physical therapy following discharge from the hospital to help you maintain your range of motion.

Follow-up

- Make sure an appointment has been scheduled for you for approximately 10-14 days after surgery.

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