

Patient Discharge Instructions

Procedure: Shoulder Arthroscopy
Physician: Dr. Wilson

Notify Dr. Wilson's office should any of the following symptoms occur: Unusual or excessive bleeding; increasing or unrelenting pain; excessive wound drainage (please note, mild drainage or spotting on your dressings is normal within the first 3 to 4 days after surgery); numbness or tingling in the affected extremity/foot; temperature of 101°F (38°C) or greater; color or temperature change in the affected extremity/foot other than bruising; increased redness or warmth; calf pain, tenderness, or swelling; or any other questions or concerns.

Pain: It is common to have pain after surgery. Take your pain pills as prescribed 1 to 2 tablets every 6 hours as needed. If you have received a nerve block injection before surgery, we recommend that you take 2 tablets right away once you fill your prescription to prevent pain. Make sure to take with food to avoid nausea or abdominal discomfort. You may gradually wean to Tylenol Extra Strength as needed. Most patients no longer regularly require the narcotic pain relievers after 5-7 days.

Inflammation: Inflammation is common after surgery and may contribute to pain and swelling. We have provided you a prescription for brand-name Celebrex® to be taken one (1) tablet twice daily with food or milk to reduce inflammation after surgery. You may also substitute with generic Naprosyn 500mg one (1) tablet twice daily with food or milk. Do not take any anti-inflammatories if you have problems with ulcers or bleeding.

Aspirin: Take Aspirin 325mg one (1) tablet daily for two (2) weeks (unless allergic) to reduce the risk of blood clots.

Diet: The medicines used for anesthesia can cause temporary nausea after surgery. We suggest you begin light with clear liquids or soft foods (such as Jello®, pudding or yogurt) the first day after surgery to minimize upset stomach. Drink at least 6 to 8 glasses of water daily. Also note that a few patients may develop significant nausea from using the prescription narcotic pain medicines. If this happens to you, stop all narcotic pain pills and use plain Tylenol. Nausea should resolve within 6 to 8 hours. Other side effects common to narcotic pain relievers include constipation, nausea and confusion. Increase your fiber intake (fruits, vegetable, grains) and use an over the counter stool softener (such as docusate or Colace) if you are having constipation.

Polar Care or Ice Treatment: If you have been provided with a Polar Care ice pack cooler use it as directed to help control swelling, pain and inflammation. Use the ice pack as often as possible and at least twenty (20) minutes, four (4) times each day. Do not apply to bare skin. Be sure to have an ACE wrap or wash cloth between ice pack and your skin to avoid frostbite. If you do not have a Polar Care, you may substitute regular ice packs or frozen foods work well. Again, don't apply ice directly to the skin and use 20 minutes each hour.

Sling: We recommend you to wear your sling 24 hours daily. You may remove the sling for light desktop or computer work or before showering. Use the sling as instructed for unless otherwise directed by Dr. Wilson.

Range of Motion: No shoulder range of motion is allowed for four (4) weeks above shoulder level. You may perform pendulum or Codman range of motion exercises unless otherwise directed by Dr. Wilson. You may wiggle, bend and straighten your elbow, wrist and fingers as much as you can tolerate. This will encourage circulation and decrease swelling after surgery. A prescription for physical therapy will be provided during your first post op visit if necessary.

Bathing: You may shower with your waterproof bandage in place after 24 hours. Remove the bandage after three (3) days. Cleanse the wounds with soap and water. Do not scrub. Pat the wounds dry afterwards with a clean dry cotton cloth. Allow to dry open to air before re-wrapping in a new bandage when necessary. Please do not apply any lotions, ointments or gels to the wound.

Sleeping: Dr. Wilson asks you to sleep with your sling for the first four (4) weeks. Shoulder surgery is painful and patients often note that sleeping in a reclined position or propped up with pillows is most comfortable.

Numbness around the incision: In the first few days, it is common to experience numbness around the incision area. Please call the office should the numbness spread to other areas of your arm.

Restrictions & driving: Avoid making important or financial decisions 24-48 hours after undergoing anesthesia. NO driving unless cleared by Dr. Wilson. NO alcohol for 24 hours or while taking pain medications. NO lifting/pushing/pulling/carrying of objects greater than 10 pounds. You are NOT allowed to climb, stoop, crawl, or kneel.

Elevation: Maintain elevation of the arm above the level of your heart while sitting and sleeping at night. For sleeping, you may wish to lie on your back, place a pillow across your chest, and place your arm on top of the pillow. Your arm may feel swollen when it is resting in the sling when you are standing. This is because your arm is lower than your heart and you may wish to position your arm so that it is elevated above your heart.

Physical therapy: You have been given a prescription for physical therapy. Make an appointment to start your treatments after the first week following surgery. The therapists will follow the protocol you have been given for your specific injury.

Appointment: Please schedule to see Dr. Wilson within 10-14 days for follow up.

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