

Post-Operative Instructions for Shoulder Arthroscopy

GUIDELINES

- After 48 hours you can remove the bulky dressing and apply Band-Aids over the sutures. Keep incisions completely dry when showering with waterproof Band-Aids and/or plastic covering (Tegaderm) until sutures are removed at your follow up appointment. After showering remove Band-Aids and reapply fresh Band-Aids.
- If a 'Shoulder Block' was administered then it will wear off in approximately 12-24 hours. Treat the pain with medications and ice. Crushed ice or a bag of frozen vegetables can be applied to the shoulder for 20 min 4-6 times a day for the first 3 days then as needed. To avoid a burn injury place a cloth onto the skin before applying ice.
- You may find that sleeping in a recliner or propped up on pillows to be more comfortable. Consider wearing button down shirts for ease of dressing. Avoid active motion of the shoulder. Try to lean forward for gravity to assist in putting arm in a sleeve or washing under your arm.
- Please contact the office if you experience increasing pain, redness, drainage, thigh/calf pain or fever greater than 101.5.

ACTIVITY AND EXERCISES

Please follow the activity instructions checked below:

- Use the sling for comfort only, otherwise it can be discontinued as you improve. Remove the sling for showering and wrist/elbow exercises. Follow Exercise Sheets **1, 2 and 3**.
- Sling is to be worn 24 hours a day. Motion of wrist and hand are encouraged while in the sling. Sling can be removed for showering and exercises. Follow Exercise Sheets **1, 2 and 3**.
- Sling is to be worn absolutely at all times except for showering and elbow motion. Straighten elbow for 5 minutes, 3 times a day. Follow Exercise Sheets **1 and 2 only**.



MEDICATIONS

- You have been prescribed a narcotic pain medication. Please use as directed and contact the office for any side effects. Take it with food. Do not drive, drink alcohol, or perform activities which require concentration or make major decisions while taking the pain medication. Constipation may occur and can be treated with over the counter Senokot and Milk of Magnesia. Contact your primary care doctor if this problem persists.
- Anti-inflammatories are useful for pain/swelling and can be used with the pain medication. Take Ibuprofen 600 mg three times a day with food. This medicine works together with the narcotic pain medication and may allow you to wean off your narcotic faster. Do **NOT** take this medication if you are allergic, have a history of ulcers, kidney disease, drug allergy, or otherwise contraindicated. Discontinue if you develop stomach upset.
- Lingering effects of the anesthesia may cause temporary nausea. Start a bland, soft diet the first day and progress to a normal healthy diet. Drink plenty of fluids. If a smoker then try to quit or cut back to improve recovery.

POST-OPERATIVE APPOINTMENTS

- If you do not already have a follow up appointment scheduled for one week after the surgery then please call the office to make this appointment which may be with your surgeon or the Physician Assistant. During this visit sutures may be removed, arthroscopic findings will be reviewed, and further treatment such as physical therapy will be discussed.

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Activity...



Driving: Do not drive until discussing this with the doctor at your first return visit to the office. You should be able to drive when you are no longer taking narcotic pain medications, and feel that you can control the wheel. This is around 3-4 weeks for most patients.

Activities: You may release the straps of your brace when sitting to write, type, or feed yourself at table top level only. **KEEP YOUR ARM IN FRONT OF YOUR BODY AT ALL TIMES. REACHING OUT TO YOUR SIDE OR BEHIND YOU WILL STRESS THE AREA THAT WAS TIGHTENED. DO NOT REACH ACROSS YOUR BODY EXCEPT FOR THE POSITION IN THE BRACE.**

Exercise: Do not run, bike, or do any other lower body workouts until after you see the surgeon at the first postoperative visit at the office

Do not Fall: Take all precautions possible to **AVOID FALLING**. See the preventing falls at home handout provided by your nurse.

*****If you have had a biceps tenodesis:** Do not lift anything heavier than a coffee cup for the first 6 weeks post-op

Home Exercises...

You will need to release both the arm and wrist straps of your immobilizer brace to do your exercises.

It is important to work on your **finger/wrist/elbow range of motion** 3-4 times a day for about 2-3 minutes at a time. Make sure you are working on getting your elbow completely straight, as it can stiffen up quickly.



Elbow Flexion/Extension

Begin with arm at side. Slowly raise elbow upwards, while keep arm against body. Return to starting position. Repeat.

2

**Home
Exercises
(cont) ...**



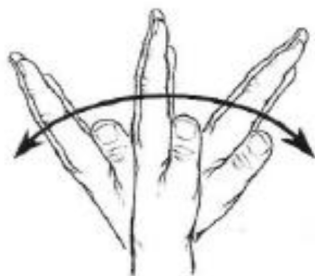
Fist Stretch

Begin with fingers straight.
Close hand to fist, then open.
Repeat.



Hand Turn

Start with palm up. Slowly
rotate forearm until palm facing
down.
Repeat.



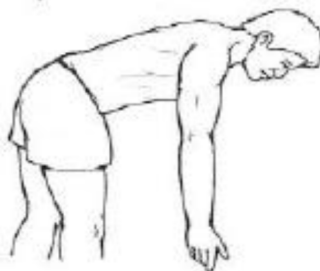
Wrist Flexion/Extension

Begin with hand straight.
Slowly move wrist in a forward,
then backward motion.
Repeat.

3

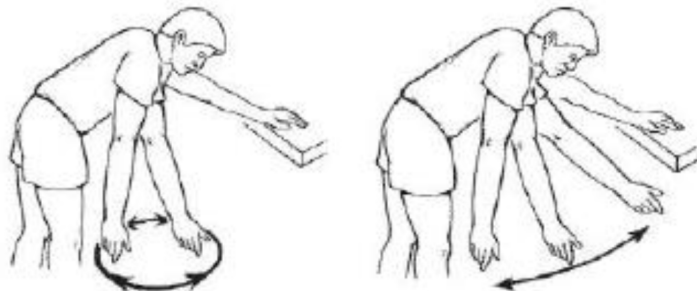
Home Exercises (cont)...

- YES**, you can lean over and let your arm hang down so that you can get to your armpit.
- NO**, you cannot lean over and let your arm hang down so that you can get to your armpit.



- YES**, you should also do pendulum exercises as described below.
- NO**, you should not do pendulum exercises.

Pendulum exercises should be done 2 times a day for about 30 seconds in each direction. Repeat the motions 2 or 3 times for a total of about 2-minutes twice a day.



***It is important to relax your shoulder during this exercise and to allow it to swing like a pendulum. The rest of your body should not move at all during this exercise. Do not move your butt back and forth or swing your hips to help propel your arm...only move your arm only. You should be bent to 90 degrees at the waist to do this exercise properly.