

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS SHOULDER ARTHROSCOPY

MEDICATION

- One of three pain medications, Norco (hydrocodone), Tramadol or Tylenol #3 will be prescribed to you. Take as instructed and as needed.
 - Pain medication may cause constipation. You may take an over the counter stool softener (Colace, Senekot, etc) to help prevent this problem.
 - You should take these medicines with food or they may nauseate you.
 - You may not drive or operate heavy equipment while on narcotics.
 - Pain medication is refilled on an individual basis and only during office hours.
- If you have a nerve block, **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE BLOCK COMPLETELY WEARS OFF.**
 - Most patients find it helpful to take two pills 8-10 hours after surgery and scheduling two pills every four to six hours the first night and morning after and then gradually wean off as tolerated.
- Try to avoid anti-inflammatories such as Ibuprofen or Naprosyn for at least **six weeks** after surgery as this may impair tissue healing.
- **Resume all home medications unless otherwise instructed.**
- Call the office (713-486-7550) if you are having an adverse reaction to the medicine.

WOUND CARE

- You may remove your bandages two days after surgery unless instructed otherwise. Do not remove the steri-strips (small pieces of tape) covering the incisions.
 - If you have a surgery for your bicep tendon, do not remove the clear bandage on the inside of your arm.
- Unless instructed otherwise, you may shower after your bandages have been removed. NO submersion of wounds (bath, hot tub, pool) is recommended for a minimum of 2 weeks after surgery.
- You may remove the sling to shower but let your arm dangle to the side. Do not use your muscles to move the shoulder if you have had a repair of your rotator cuff.
 - To access your armpit, lean forward slightly to let your arm dangle away from your side.

ACTIVITY

- Do not attempt to use your own muscles to lift your arm away from your side until instructed.
- The involved arm should be taken out of the sling two or three times a day to bend and straighten your elbow.
- You may move the hand and wrist as tolerated.
- Formal Physical Therapy will begin one to six weeks after surgery depending on the procedure.

SLING

- The sling should be used (with abduction pillow if given) at all times including night, except when dressing, showering or exercising the arm unless otherwise instructed.
 - **Position the pillow at the side so your arm and hand face forward as opposed to across your stomach.**
- If the inside of the sling irritates your skin, you may find lining it with a soft t-shirt or towel helps.
- You will be instructed on how long you will need to wear it and whether you need to use the pillow on your first visit.
- It is not recommended that you drive in your sling.

SLEEP

- Night time will probably be the most uncomfortable time.
 - Sleeping in a reclined chair or propped up on a pile of pillows may aid in sleeping.
 - Placing a pillow behind your sling at the elbow to prevent it from sagging may also be of benefit.

COLD THERAPY

- Ice should be used to assist in pain and swelling. Do not apply directly to exposed skin. Try to ice 20-30 minutes every 3-4 hours if possible.
 - A simple bag of frozen peas may be used as an inexpensive ice pack. Buy several bags of peas, place in a gallon size zip-lock bag making them about an inch thick and removing as much air as possible. Return to freezer, lying flat when done.

EMERGENCIES

- If you have an emergency contact Dr. Flores's office at 713-486-7550.
- Contact the office if you notice any of the following:
 - Uncontrolled nausea or vomiting, reaction to medication, inability to urinate, fever greater than 101.5 (low grade fever 1-2 days after surgery is normal), severe pain not relieved by pain medication, redness or continued drainage around incisions (a small amount is normal).
- **If you are having chest pain or difficulty breathing, call 911 or go to the closest emergency room.**

FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENT

- Please make your first post-op visit 5-7 after surgery if not done so already.
- **If you have any questions, please call the office at 713-486-7550.**