

Postoperative Instructions: Shoulder Hardware Removal

When You Get Home:

Rest for the remainder of the day.

Be Safe- stay in the care of responsible adult the first 24 hours.

Use Ice as much as possible:

20 minutes on/20 minutes off for regular ice packs/frozen peas, with a towel or cloth between you and the Ice
If you are using a Cold Therapy unit, use it according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Pain Medication:

Take your pain medication- it's better to stay ahead of the pain.

Oral Narcotic pain medicines (Vicodin/Hydrocodone, Percocet, Tramadol, Codeine) help with pain, but can cause:

Drowsiness: Be Safe, don't drive, operate machinery, don't mix it with alcohol.

Stomach upset: Take with food, or try over the counter Zantac or Tums.

Constipation: Drink enough fluids, use fiber supplements (Metamucil, Senokot)

Take Prune juice or Milk of Magnesia if still constipated after 2 days

You may take anti-inflammatory medication to help with pain and swelling.

Some patients are prescribed Toradol (Ketorolac): take every 6 hours for 4 days.

Ok to take with Pain Medications, not with other anti-inflammatories

After 4 days of Toradol, you can take other anti-inflammatory medicines like:

Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), Naproxen (Aleve), Lodine, Mobic, Celebrex

Go easy on the anti-inflammatory medications if you have stomach problems.

Activities and Restrictions:

Sling: You may use the sling for comfort- but you may remove if you would like to.

Most people will use it in the house for at least the first day or two

You'll be getting around your house well within a few days.

Resume simple activities (even stationary bike, exercise walking) in about 3 days.

Driving: Only after you are SAFE, which means:

Off pain medications, and able to control a vehicle safely

This usually takes about 4-5 days, sometimes longer. Use your best judgment.

Exercises: Begin exercises immediately:

Move your elbow/wrist and fingers around many times during the day

Lean over and gently swing your shoulder in a circle (called Pendulum exercises)

Physical therapy will give you more exercises when you see them in a week or two.

Dressing and Wound Care:

Keep the surgical dressing on for 2 days, then you can change the dressing

It's okay to take a shower 2 days after surgery- just dab the incision dry

A good idea is to put a plastic chair in your shower and sit down.

Then put on a new gauze dressing, or a large square band-aid.

Don't take off the stickers on the skin (Steri-Strips) that cover the blue suture.

No bath/pool/hot tub (putting the shoulder underwater) for 2 weeks

Problems or Questions? Call us at 925.600.7020

Feel free to call us if you have any concerns, or for:

Unrelenting pain, or increasing swelling or numbness or high fevers (over 101.5)

Continuous drainage or bleeding that is soaking your dressing

Chest pain, shortness of breath