

Postoperative Instructions: Shoulder AC Joint Stabilization

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 HAVE TO wear the Gunslinger (Lerman) brace for 4 weeks.

It is okay to gently flex and extend your wrist and forearm, with the arm at the side.

Walking: you make walk for fitness when in the brace; just keep the arm supported in the brace.

Driving: Only after you are SAFE, which means:

Off pain medicines, and able to control a vehicle safely using only your other arm.

This can be difficult when using the Gunslinger brace.

This usually takes about a week, sometimes longer. Use your best judgment.

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 incisions dry

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

Then put on new gauze dressings, or some square band-aids

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

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