

Postoperative Instructions: Shoulder Proximal Humerus Fracture

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 will be wearing the sling for 4 weeks.

If you are sitting down, you may remove the sling, but keep the arm at your side.

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

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

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

Driving: Only after you are SAFE, which means:

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

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

Exercises:

You can start some gentle Pendulum exercises: lean over, and gently move your arm in a small circle.

Begin elbow/wrist/hand exercises immediately, without any weight (coffee cup is the limit).

You can gently move your elbow, wrist and fingers several times during the day (no weights).

Physical therapy usually starts 2-3 weeks after surgery, depending on your particular fracture.

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