

Postoperative Instructions: Total Shoulder Replacement

When You Get Home From the Hospital:

Rest most of the day until you have your normal energy back.

Be Safe- stay in the care of responsible adult most of the first day or two.

Use Ice as much as possible: Use a towel or cloth between you and the Ice.

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), Lidocaine, Mobic, Celebrex

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

Dressing and Wound Care:

You can change the dressing once daily.

No need to place any ointments or medications on or around the incision.

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

Then put on new gauze dressing just to cover the incision.

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.

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, then use it for going to the store or taking a walk.

Okay to move the arm up from the side or over the head as much as you can tolerate.

No turning the arm outward (External Rotation) over 30 degrees for 6 weeks.

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 1-2 weeks, sometimes longer. Use your best judgment.

Exercises: Begin exercises immediately:

Continue the exercises Physical/Occupational Therapy showed you in the hospital.

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

Move your elbow/wrist and fingers around many times during the day (no weights)

Physical therapy will continue in your home or in their outpatient locations.

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