



Lee A. Kaback, MD
Shoulder and Elbow Surgery

Shoulder Arthroscopy

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

ROTATOR CUFF REPAIR / SUBACROMIAL DECOMPRESSION / DISTAL CLAVICLE EXCISION

DAY OF SURGERY:

- 1) Use the sling provided. You should remove the sling at least 3 times a day to move your elbow up and down, be sure to keep your arm at your side, then put the sling back on. **Wear your sling 24 hours a day until your first appt, even while sleeping. If you did not have a rotator cuff repair, you can remove your sling when sensation returns to your entire arm.**
- 2) Avoid resting on the arm and do not lift anything with the involved arm.
- 3) Take the pain medication as prescribed. In most cases, you will be prescribed an anti-inflammatory medication and a narcotic pain medication. You should take **both** of the medications as prescribed. A block is used during surgery and you may feel fine for the first 24 hours, however, it is still important to take your pain medication to stay ahead of the pain. You should start your pain medications when you get home. You should resume your normal medications for other conditions the day after your surgery.
- 4) Side effects of pain meds –nausea, drowsiness, and constipation. To decrease side effects take meds with food and consider taking Colace to prevent constipation.
- 5) Maintain your surgical dressing. **It is normal for some bleeding to occur.** If blood soaks through **do not become alarmed, reinforce with additional dressing.** Do not get this dressing wet. Cover it while showering/bathing.

DAY 3:

- 1) You may **remove the bandage** and gauze from your shoulder. The bandages you remove may be wet to the touch. This is normal as the shoulder is filled with water during the surgery and it leaks out for 24-36 hours after the surgery. Your shoulder



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may be swollen and black and blue, this is normal. **Keep steri-strips (white band-aids) on.**

- 2) You may **begin to shower** with the wounds exposed after 72 hours then apply band-aids after shower. You should change your band-aids daily or as needed.
- 3) Keep your bandages and wounds dry. If the wounds do get wet, remove the band-aids, pat dry and reapply fresh band-aids. **Under no conditions should you use a tub, sauna, hot-tub or swimming pool at this time.**
- 4) You should **not drive** until seen by your physician

GENERAL INFORMATION

If at any time there are any concerns (**increased swelling, redness, drainage from the incisions, warmth, fever, chills, or severe pain unrelieved by prescribed medications**) or if you have any questions contact the office at 518-453-9088.

ICE THERAPY

Icing is very important for the first 10-14 days after surgery. Begin immediately after surgery. Use ice packs every 2 hours for 20 minutes daily until your first post-operative visit; remember to keep arm supported while icing. Care must be taken with icing to avoid frostbite to the skin. To avoid frostbite, place a T-shirt between the ice and your skin.

EATING

The anesthetic drugs used during your surgery may cause nausea for the first 24-48 hours. If you become nauseous, eat and drink only clear liquids (Sprite, Selzer, jello, clear soup broth). The only solids should be crackers or toast. You may progress to your normal diet if you are not nauseated. You should have something to eat before taking your pain meds.



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POST OP APPOINTMENTS

- 1) Your appointment should be **7** days after surgery. A post-op appointment has been made for _____ at our _____ office. You will need physical therapy starting a week after your surgery.