

## **POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS SHOULDER ARTHROSCOPY**

### **MEDICATION**

- After surgery you will be prescribed multimodal medications for pain relief (percocet/oxycodone, gabapentin, tylenol, celebrex). Take as instructed and as needed.
  - Pain medication may cause constipation. You may take an over the counter stool softener (Colace, Senekot, etc) to help prevent this problem.
  - You should take these medicines with food or they may nauseate you.
  - You may not drive or operate heavy equipment while on narcotics.
  - Pain medication is refilled on an individual basis and only during office hours.
- If you received a nerve block prior to your surgery, **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE BLOCK COMPLETELY WEARS OFF.**
- Resume all home medications unless otherwise instructed.
- Call the office if you are having an adverse reaction to the medicine.

### **WOUND CARE**

- You may remove your bandages two days after surgery unless instructed otherwise. Do not remove the steri-strips (small pieces of tape) covering the incisions.
- Unless instructed otherwise, you may shower after your bandages have been removed. NO submersion of wounds (bath, hot tub, pool) is recommended for a minimum of 4 weeks after surgery.
- You may remove the sling to shower but let your arm dangle to the side. Do not use your muscles to move the shoulder if you have had a repair of your rotator cuff.
  - To access your armpit, lean forward slightly to let your arm dangle away from your side.

### **ACTIVITY**

- Do not attempt to use your own muscles to move your elbow away from your side until instructed.
- The involved arm may be taken out of the sling three times a day to bend and straighten your elbow.
- You may move the hand and wrist as tolerated.
- Formal Physical Therapy will begin one to six weeks after surgery depending on the procedure.

### **SLING**

- The sling should be used (with abduction pillow if given) at all times including night, except when dressing, showering or exercising the arm unless otherwise instructed.
- Position the pillow at the side so your arm and hand face forward as opposed to across your stomach.
- If the inside of the sling irritates your skin, you may find lining it with a soft t-shirt or towel helps.

- You will be instructed on how long you will need to wear it and whether you need to use the pillow on your first visit (normally sling is worn for the first 6 weeks).
- It is not recommended that you drive in your sling.

### **SLEEP**

- Nighttime will probably be the most uncomfortable time.
- Sleeping in a reclined chair or propped up on a pile of pillows may aid in sleeping.
- Placing a pillow behind the elbow to prevent it from sagging may also be of benefit.
- Gabapentin taken at night is also helpful.

### **COLD THERAPY**

- Ice should be used to assist in pain and swelling. Do not apply directly to exposed skin. Try to ice 20- 30 minutes every 3-4 hours if possible.
- If you have a cryotherapy unit (you will be sent home with this from surgery) for the shoulder, use as prescribed according to instructions.

### **EMERGENCIES**

- If you have an emergency contact Dr. Toole's office.
- Contact the office if you notice any of the following:
  - Uncontrolled nausea or vomiting, reaction to medication, inability to urinate, fever greater than 101.5 (low grade fever 1-2 days after surgery is normal), severe pain not relieved by pain medication, redness or continued drainage around incisions (a small amount is normal).
- **If you are having chest pain or difficulty breathing, call 911 or go to the closest emergency room.**

### **FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENT**

- Please make your first post-op visit 7 days after surgery if not scheduled. Your first visit will usually already be scheduled for you.
- **If you have any questions, please call the office.**

### **PHYSICAL THERAPY**

- It is imperative that physical therapy be scheduled promptly after surgery, normally the week of or first week after surgery.
- Please refer to **toolesportsmedicine.com** for your specific protocol based off what was done at the time of surgery.