

# Shoulder Arthroscopy Post-Surgical Instructions

## Pain Medications:

1. Take with food and water.
2. Prevent nausea/vomiting – start with light food/water.
3. Nerve blocks – if you received a nerve block, start your pain medications BEFORE the nerve block wears off.
4. Anti-inflammatories (NSAIDS) (if not allergic):
  - a. Ibuprofen: take 1 tablet (800mg) every 8 hours as needed for 7-14 days.
  - b. If allergic to NSAIDS - discuss with Dr. Hommen.
5. Pain medications:
  - a. Percocet (Oxycodone/Acetaminophen), Norco or Vicodin (Hydrocodone/Acetaminophen), Ultram (Tramadol): take one or two tablets every 4-6 hours as needed for pain.
  - b. If allergic to the above - discuss with Dr. Hommen.
  - c. Florida State laws limit the number of narcotic pills you will be given.
  - d. Section 893.055(3)(a), Florida Statutes mandates that Dr. Hommen reviews and reports your controlled substance prescription to E-Force Florida Prescription Drug Monitoring Program.
  - e. Possible side effects of narcotics: addiction, constipation, nausea, over-dose, disorientation, hallucination, liver and other organ problems.
  - f. Try to discontinue narcotic medications (Percocet, Norco, Tramadol) as soon as possible.
  - g. Therapy sessions – if you are having pain with therapy, coordinate your medications prior to the session.
  - h. Many patients after 24-48 hours from surgery are able to control all pain with a combination of 1) Tylenol extra strength (use as directed on bottle) AND/OR 2) over-the-counter Aleve or Advil (use as directed on the bottle).
  - i. Pain management – a) if you are taking narcotics prior to surgery, b) under the care of a pain management specialist or other doctors for pain medications – Dr. Hommen will need to coordinate your pain medications with your other providers.

- ***Note – should you experience stomach problems or if your body is not tolerating any of the medications above, STOP the medications. You may discontinue the above medications as you see fit and refer to over-the-counter medications like “Advil”, “Aleve”, or “Tylenol”.***

## Activity and Wound Care:

1. Rest of day of surgery through 72 hours after surgery.
2. Cryo-cuff or ice machine: (insurance permitting). Use for first 72 hours for maximum benefit. Remove cuff or wrap from shoulder every 20-30 minutes per hour to allow skin to warm to avoid ice burn to the skin.
3. Ice packs – consider the use of a gel pack if no ice machine was authorized. You should benefit from similar affects. Use same instructions as above.
4. Bandages:
  - a. Keep your incision sites and sutures clean and dry.
  - b. Remove outer bulky dressing and gauze 72 hours after surgery.
  - c. Leave steri-strips (butterfly stitches) in place to be removed by Dr. Hommen’s office.
  - d. Open to air – if your incisions are clean, dry and intact without drainage, then you may leave the incisions with steri-strips in place open to air throughout the day and night.
  - e. Shower – after having removed the dressings from shoulder, you may shower 72 hours after surgery. Do not scrub the incision sites. Allow shampoo to run over incision. After shower, towel dry the incisions. Leave the steri-strips in place. No need to apply further dressings or band-aids.

- f. If incision sites are moist, draining, red, or painful, do not wet the incision sites and contact Dr. Hommen's office.
  - g. Pool/Bath – do not submerge your incisions in pool or bath until Dr. Hommen clears you to do so.
  - h. Your incisions may have Dermabond (similar to Krazy-Glue). Allow the sutures underneath to absorb on their own.
  - i. Your incisions may have sutures that need to be removed 10-14 days after surgery in Dr. Hommen's office.
5. Sleep – consider sleeping in an upright position the first 72 hours. Sleeping flat in bed may be uncomfortable. Be sure to use your sling at night as directed.

### **Sling Use:**

1. Length of use depends on the procedure you had done.
  - a. Rotator cuff repair, reconstruction (usually 6 weeks).
  - b. Labrum/instability repairs (usually 4 weeks).
  - c. SLAP repairs (usually 4 weeks).
  - d. Biceps tenodesis (usually 4 weeks).
  - e. Debridement only – sling as needed
  - f. You will be notified how long to wear your sling after your specific surgical procedure
2. When your sling is off:
  - a. Keep elbow at your side.
  - b. Do not lift anything over weight of coffee cup.
  - c. May straighten elbow to avoid stiffness at hand, wrist and elbow.
3. Four General Rules of removing sling during first 4 weeks:
  - a. May remove when at relaxing at home (watching TV).
  - b. May remove for showers.
  - c. Do NOT remove for sleep.
  - d. Do NOT remove when outside of house.
  - e. EXCEPTIONS to above: 1) rotator cuff reconstructions with grafts, 2) complex surgeries.
4. Squeeze ball. You may be given a squeeze ball attached to your sling. Use it 2-3 times per day. Squeeze 20 times per sessions. Purpose: to avoid stiffness and swelling in hand/forearm.
5. How to re-apply sling – Consider taking pictures of the sling prior to removing it. This will allow you to re-apply the sling in the same position.

### **Physical Therapy:**

1. In your discharge papers, you will be given a prescription for physical therapy.
2. If there is no PT prescription, in your folder, then you will be given one at your first postop appointment.
3. Contact our office to locate physical therapy facilities around the area of your choice.
4. It will be beneficial to start therapy 48-72 hours after surgery.

### **Return to Work or School:**

1. You may return to work (sedentary) or school 2-3 days after surgery if pain is tolerable.
2. Returning to heavy labor will be determined by Dr. Hommen.

### **Normal Sensations and Findings after Surgery:**

1. Nerve block – will stay in effect 8-24 hours from the time of surgery. This may cause numbness and inability to use the extremity including fingers until the block wears off.
2. Persistent numbness at hand – usually resolves 2-3 days after surgery.
3. An increase or surge in the amount of pain after the block wears off. See Pain Medications instructions above.
4. Shoulder, elbow, forearm pain for several weeks.
5. Shoulder swelling and warmth up to 3 weeks.
6. Small amount of bloody drainage first 3-4 days.

7. Swelling at the hand. See section "Sling Use" below.
8. Low grade temperature under 101.5 degrees. If this occurs, a) drink plenty of fluids, b) cough, c) take 10 deep, slow breaths and hold for a second and cough forcefully afterwards.
9. Redness at incision sites for several days.

**NOTIFY OFFICE IMMEDIATELY IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SIGNS OR SYMPTOMS OCCUR:**

1. Change in incision (increased redness, drainage, incision opens up, suture comes out, foul smell, yellow discharge).
2. Sharp pains at shoulder.
3. Temperature over 101.5 degrees.
4. Fevers, chills, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea.
5. Pain not relieved by pain medications.

**Post-Surgical Appointments:**

Please call the office to schedule if you do not already have your first appointment.