

# Postoperative Instruction Shoulder Arthroscopy

Adam M. Freedhand, MD 713-827-9316

1. After arthroscopy the wound is covered with a dressing. You may remove it after 24 hours. Due to the large amount of fluid used during the arthroscopy, it is normal to see some bloody drainage on the dressing. The dressing should be removed and wounds covered with Band-Aids on the first day after surgery. Showering is allowed after post-op day 2. The wound may be exposed in the shower without scrubbing the area. The wound should not be submerged in a bathtub or pool until the sutures are removed.
2. Patients are generally more comfortable sleeping in a reclining chair or with pillows propped behind the shoulder. Some difficulty with sleeping is common for 2-3 weeks after surgery.
3. Icing is very important for the first 5-7 days after surgery but may be used as long as you like. Ice is applied for 20-minute periods 3-4 times per day. Care must be taken with icing to avoid frostbite to the skin.
4. On the first post-op day, begin doing the physical therapy exercises that were given/instructed to you. You may use your arm to assist with dressing, eating and personal hygiene unless specifically instructed not to by Dr. Freedhand. Be sure to use and move your hand, wrist and elbow in order to decrease the swelling in your arm. While exercise is important, don't over-do-it. Common sense is the rule. You will be given exercise instructions.
5. The anesthetic drugs used during your surgery may cause nausea for the first 24 hours. If nausea is encountered, drink only clear liquids. The only solids should be dry crackers or toast. If nausea or vomiting becomes severe please call the doctor. A low-grade fever (100.5) is not uncommon in the first 24 hours but unusual beyond. Please call the doctor with any temperature over 101.0 degrees
6. Local anesthetics (i.e. Novocaine) are put into the joint during surgery. It is not uncommon for patients to encounter more pain on the first or second day after surgery. Using the pain medication as directed will help control pain with little risk of complication. Taking pain medication before bedtime will assist in sleeping. It is important not to drink or drive while taking narcotic medication. You should resume your normal medications for other conditions the day after surgery. We have no specific diet restrictions after surgery but extensive use of narcotics can lead to constipation. High fiber diet, lots of fluids and muscle activity can prevent occurrence.

1. Following shoulder surgery, it is common to use a sling for 3-5 days. If you have had a rotator cuff tear repair or labral reconstruction the doctor is going to ask you to remain in the sling for longer. You will also be instructed on gentle range of motion exercises to be started the night of surgery. Passive range of motion (using the opposite hand to move the operated arm) is always encouraged and can speed up the recovery. Bruising down to the elbow and chest wall is not uncommon. Sleeping is usually aided by placing a pillow behind the operated shoulder and under the back, neck and shoulders.
2. The doctor will need to reexamine you 2 weeks after surgery. Please call the office to schedule a follow-up appointment.
3. If unexpected problems, emergencies or other issues occur and you need to talk to the doctor, call the office. After hours our answering service will route your call to a physician who will be able to advise you concerning your problem.