

Post Operative Instructions: Shoulder Arthroplasty

You are recovering from reconstructive shoulder surgery. The following information is to help make your recovery as smooth and rapid as possible.

1. Usually the post op dressing is waterproof. Follow the dressing instructions provided by the hospital staff.
2. Post-operative bleeding is common. Reinforce the dressing as needed. If you have concerns on the amount of bleeding, please call the office.
3. Wear your sling at all times. Remove your sling **ONLY** for rehab exercises, showering and clothing changes as directed. Keep your arm at your side for showering and clothing changes.
4. You may ice over the shoulder as directed until your first post-op visit. A bag of ice or frozen peas work well. Use the ice 20 minutes at a time for at least 2 times per day.
5. Your post-operative therapy begins the day of surgery. Elbow and wrist Range of Motion (ROM) exercises should begin on the first post-operative day. You need to perform these exercises 4 times per day as tolerated.
6. You may remove your sling once a day to do the rehab exercises prescribed by your surgeon. These consist of pendulum exercises and were taught to you by the therapist in the hospital. If you have any questions about which exercises, or how to do the exercises, please call the office. Do not reach to the side (externally rotate) more than 30 degrees for 6 weeks. Do not lift more than a few pounds with your operative arm for 6 weeks.

7. Pain after surgery is common. The prescriptions given to you should control your pain. Do NOT mix alcohol and prescription pain medications. Your need for prescription pain medication should decrease after 3-4 days. After that, you should begin to take your preferred over the counter pain reliever (Advil, Tylenol, aspirin) as needed.

8. If you have the following problems, call the office: increased pain after the first 3-4 days, a temperature over 101.5, unusual rashes, circulation or sensation problems.

9. Do NOT drive while you are still wearing your sling or if you are still taking narcotic pain medication. You will be advised on when you can return to driving.

10. Your first post-op office visit will be 10 - 14 days after surgery. Please call the office with any concerns or questions (607) 734-4110.