

Surgery Instructions – Shoulder

After Surgery

***** All instructions & protocols can be found on my website *****

<http://www.patrickmcgahanmd.com/physical-therapy-pdfs.html>

- Post-operative Appointment
 - If you have not already made one, call my office to schedule your first appointment 1-2 weeks after surgery

- Pain Control
 - Pain medication will be given at your pre-operative appointment
 - Narcotics are used as needed
 - Anti-inflammatories should be started directly after surgery, can be taken regularly, and may continue for four weeks after surgery
 - For medication refills or changes,
 - For refills of medications, call your pharmacy or my office during office hours
 - For changes to medications, call my office during office hours
 - On-call physicians can NOT prescribe for patients they have not seen
 - Ice the shoulder 20 minutes per hour for the first 72 hours while awake
 - Be very careful when applying cold directly to the skin in limiting how much time it is used to avoid cold burns
 - If a cold therapy unit has been supplied, it is for home use. I
 - After the first 72 hours, ice the shoulder at least 3 times a day and especially after physical therapy sessions
 - It will work through the dressings

- Swelling & Tingling
 - It is normal to have some mild swelling, tingling, or numbness after surgery
 - Taking the arm out of the sling and resting it on a pillow can help, if necessary

- Dressings
 - Dressings can be taken off 72 hours after surgery
 - You can replace the dressings with band-aids.
 - There may be drainage for the first 48 – 72 hours from the incisions. This is normal
 - You may take a shower 3 days post-op
 - Once the dressings are removed, you can use soap and water on the wounds
 - Do NOT take a bath or swim as the incisions should not be soaked in water for 4 weeks post-op
 - Keep the incisions clean and dry as much as possible

Pain control:

- Ice 20 minutes, 3 times per day.
- Elevate extremity above heart as much as possible.
- Ibuprofen 800 mg every 8 hours as needed
- Norco 1-2 tablets every 6 hours as needed

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Surgery Instructions – Shoulder

- Physical Therapy
 - Physical therapy usually begins 1-2 weeks after surgery
 - If you have not already been given an appointment for physical therapy after surgery, please contact my office for a referral
 - My office will supply you with a prescription for your therapist
 - My physical therapy protocol can be downloaded from my website
 - A sling will be placed on your arm at the hospital or surgery center
 - Do NOT use your arm
 - Do NOT take off the sling except to do therapy, shower, or change clothes
 - Therapy may have you take off sling occasionally if swelling occurs
 - Do NOT lift your arm or use it to carry anything
 - Do NOT move the arm out from your side to write or use a mouse
 - Do NOT guard the arm and keep the arm relaxed at your side
 - If we are doing surgery for stiffness, physical therapy begins the day after surgery, and the sling is only for comfort
- What to Expect
 - Surgery to repair a torn structure (i.e. rotator cuff, labrum) or stabilize shoulder
 - Immobilized in a sling for 6 weeks
 - Sling can be removed 1-2 times per day to stretch your elbow but NOT your shoulder
 - If labrum or biceps repaired, then do not actively flex the elbow
 - Begin passive range of motion exercises by 1st week (after surgery) unless otherwise specified
 - Take your sling off to do your exercises but wear it at all other times
 - Remove the sling by the 6th week
 - Begin active-assisted range of motion exercises by 5-6th week. At this point, you are able to lift light objects like a pen or paper ONLY
 - Begin strengthening exercises by 12th week. Still NO heavy lifting
 - Return to full sports and activities by 4-6 months depending on progress
 - Surgery to shave bone (acromioplasty) or clean out (debridement) but NO repairs
 - Sling immobilization for 1st week. Remove sling by 1st week (after surgery)
 - Active-assisted range of motion allowed but focus on passive range of motion and pendulums. Progression as tolerated. Allowed to lift pen or paper objects
 - Return to full sports and activities by 1-3 months depending on progress

Surgery Instructions – Pain Control After Surgery

Pain Control:

1. Pain is worse the first 48-72 hours after surgery
2. Pain is often worse the day after surgery when a nerve block or local anesthesia wears off
3. Take your pain medicine on a regular, scheduled basis
4. Take the pain medication before the pain becomes severe, so that you “stay ahead of the pain.”
5. Ice 20 minutes, 3 times per day or use the cold therapy unit.
6. Elevate extremity above heart as much as possible.
7. Ibuprofen 800 mg every 8 hours as needed (as long as you can tolerate NSAIDS)
8. Norco (or other narcotic pain medication) 1-2 tablets every 6 hours as needed
9. Do not mix narcotic pain medication with alcohol or other sedative medication or sleep aids

Pain control: “STAY AHEAD OF THE PAIN”

- Ice 20 minutes, 3 times per day.
- Elevate extremity above heart as much as possible.
- Ibuprofen 800 mg every 8 hours as needed
- Norco 1-2 tablets every 6 hours as needed