



## Shoulder Surgery Post-Operative Instructions

### 1. **Wound care**

- Shoulder Arthroscopy: A physical therapist or other skilled medical professional may remove the dressing 1-3 days post operatively. You may shower two days after surgery. Do not remove steri-strips covering incisions.
- Total Shoulder Replacement: Your dressing will be removed approximately 2 weeks after surgery. It is OK to shower over the waterproof dressing.

### 2. **Driving**

- Do not drive until cleared by your physician. You should not drive while you are taking narcotic pain medication.

### 3. **Pain control**

- Use ice 30 minutes every hour for the first 48 hours after surgery, and then as beneficial for the first 2 weeks after surgery. This may be decreased depending on your pain and swelling.
- If you had a nerve block, take pain medication as soon as you start feeling pain. Stay ahead of the pain for the first 48 hours and then start decreasing the amount of pain medication as your pain decreases.
- Unless otherwise directed by your doctor, try to avoid taking NSAIDs (Ibuprofen, Naproxen, Aleve, Advil, Mobic, Celebrex) after a rotator cuff repair, as some studies have demonstrated decreased healing rates when these medications are taken after surgery. After your two week post-operative visit these medications may be resumed. For other surgeries such as replacements, frozen shoulder, and bone spur removals, NSAIDs may be taken immediately after surgery.

### 4. **Sling**

- It is imperative that you remain in a sling at all times until directed by your physician or physical therapist to stop use. You may remove for showering only.

### 5. **Other**

- It is very common to experience nausea with general anesthesia or with narcotic pain medication. If you experience nausea, you may be prescribed a medication such as Phenergan or Zofran to take. Itching may also occur and over the counter Benadryl can help significantly.
- When taking narcotic pain medication, constipation is a common problem. We encourage patients to start taking stool softeners immediately after surgery to prevent this side effect. Over the counter medications such as Dulcolax, Senakot, and Miralax are helpful. Take as directed on the packaging.

### 6. **Therapy**

- Good outcomes from shoulder surgery are very dependent on the post-op physical therapy. It is imperative that you schedule and attend therapy sessions. Each shoulder surgery is unique and you will be instructed on how and when to move your shoulder. If you have not received instruction, do not start moving your shoulder until instructed to do so.