



# ORTHOPAEDIC ASSOCIATES

*of Wisconsin*

There is a Difference.

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## **ROTATOR CUFF SHOULDER SURGERY DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS**

- PAIN:** You will be given a prescription for pain medicine and a muscle relaxant if appropriate. Have these filled at your local pharmacy or where your insurance plan has made arrangements. Take these medications as prescribed. Do not combine the medications that we prescribe with any other pain medications or muscle relaxants. Do not drive while taking the pain medications. Do not drink alcoholic beverages while taking pain medication. Pain medication can sometimes cause constipation. We recommend over-the-counter medications from your nearest pharmacy to treat constipation. Additionally, you should take an Aspirin 81mg daily, for 30 days, if you are not already on this medication or another blood thinner. This helps to prevent blood clots. Do not take this if you are unable to take NSAIDS.
- NAUSEA:** It is not unexpected to have nausea and sometimes vomiting as a side effect of anesthesia. You will be given a prescription to help the nausea. Take the anti-nausea medicine every 6 hours if needed.
- DIET:** Slowly resume your regular diet as tolerated.
- CONSTIPATION:** The pain medication can sometimes cause constipation. We recommend over-the-counter medications from your nearest pharmacy to treat constipation.
- ACTIVITY:** You may bend and straighten your fingers, wrist, and elbow. Do not raise your arm up or away from your body on your own. You may perform pendulum exercises by carefully removing your sling, leaning forward, and letting your arm dangle. You may make small circular motions with your arm. Do not carry anything heavier than 1 pound with your operated arm. Do not use your arm to push yourself up from a chair. Do not lean on your elbow. If you have a **CPM (continuous passive motion)** device, use daily as instructed. Attempt to increase setting with each use, as much as you comfortably can, unless directed otherwise. (some large tears are treated by leaving the CPM on the original settings for 2-6 weeks)

- SLING:** A sling is necessary to support the arm. Wear the sling at all times. You may remove the sling for showering, pendulum exercises, CPM use or to put a shirt on. You may bend and straighten your fingers, wrist, and elbow.
- ICE PACK** You should place an ice pack up to 1 hour, four times a day for 3 days after surgery. Place a towel between the ice pack and the skin so the ice pack is not directly touching the skin. The ice pack will help reduce swelling and pain.
- WOUNDS:** Remove your bandage at home 3 days after surgery. There is no need to apply additional bandages as long as the wounds are dry. There will be steri-strips (like band-aids against the skin) covering up each incision site and they may have a small amount of dried blood on them. Keep the steri-strips in place for 10-14 days – they will eventually peel off in the shower. The incisions may be sore, swell and develop bruising over the next several days. This will go away and no special care is needed.
- BATHING:** It is safe to take a shower 3 days after surgery. To bathe, remove the sling and leave your arm by your side. To wash under your armpit, lean over and let the arm fall away from your body. **DO NOT** raise your arm! Do not scrub the incision sites just allow water to run over them. Your hand and forearm skin may be dry and peel due to the strong disinfectant soap we use at the time of surgery.
- PRECAUTIONS:** If you have a temperature greater than 101.5 degrees, severe pain, or redness in your shoulder, please contact the office.
- FOLLOW-UP:** If you do not have a **postoperative appointment** scheduled, call (262) 303-5144 to make an appointment for 2 weeks after your surgery date. You will receive a prescription for physical therapy, if it has not already been scheduled.