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## **Post-operative Guidelines**

### **Shoulder Arthroscopy**

You have just undergone arthroscopic surgery of the shoulder. These are general guidelines for your post-operative care including pain management. Please follow any other instructions specific to the procedure you had performed that may have been given to you or your family.

#### **Pain Management**

You may experience significant discomfort depending on the extent of the procedure performed. The pain medication that has been prescribed to you should be taken as needed and may be required more frequently during the first two days after surgery.

Narcotic pain medication may have side effects such as nausea and constipation. If constipation becomes a problem you can purchase a stool softener such as Colace or equivalents (equivalents may be substantially less expensive) at a pharmacy. If constipation continues the next step is to try a laxative such as Dulcolax, which can also be purchased without prescription. Attempt to take your pain medication with food. If nausea is significant please contact your physician.

Ice is a very effective way to treat pain. You may have been provided with an ice pack and cooler at the time of surgery. Standard ice packs are also fine. You can use ice as much as you like during the day. Avoid placing the ice directly onto your skin and do not sleep with an ice pack on. Ice is also particularly helpful for discomfort after rehabilitation, or as you increase your activities.

#### **Activity**

Your arm will be in a sling with a pillow after surgery. This should be worn at all times for the first week unless otherwise instructed. The sling may be removed for showering, keeping the arm comfortably at your side and to perform gentle range of motion exercises for the elbow and wrist. Do not perform exercises with the shoulder unless instructed to do so.

**Bandages**

Mild drainage from your incisions which may show through the bandages frequently occurs and is normal. Your initial bandage may be changed between 48-72 hours after surgery. Do not remove the small white strips over the incisions. You may shower after removing the bandage, gently rinsing the operative area with normal soap and water. Do not submerge or soak the operative site. Gently dry the area and re-cover with a new bandage or band-aids if there is any continued drainage, if you will be going outside, or if you just prefer to have it covered. Otherwise you can leave the shoulder uncovered.

**Follow-up**

If you have not already been scheduled, please call the office to schedule an appointment for approximately 1 week following your operation.

**Other**

Low grade fever below 101° F is not uncommon after surgery. Tylenol or the narcotic pain medication prescribed which also contains Tylenol may be taken as needed for fever. Please call the office at 512-617-1989 if you have higher temperatures or other concerns.