

Rotator Cuff Repair Post-operative Instructions

SLING

You will be wearing a removable sling after your surgery. You should wear the sling at all times except for physical therapy. You will remove the sling 4 times a day to perform your exercises.

PHYSICAL THERAPY

PT is an important part of your recovery. PT will begin AFTER your first post-op visit. You must see a physical therapist 3 times a week. Be sure that the place you have chosen is convenient to you and that they take your insurance. In addition, you will perform your exercises at home 4 times a day. These exercises will consist of hand, wrist and elbow range of motion as well as specific exercises to prevent your shoulder from becoming stiff. REMEMBER: you must NOT raise your arm above your head by using your own muscle power. The therapist will raise your arm for you. This is called passive exercise. The sutures used to sew your rotator cuff together are strong, but by raising the arm by yourself you are applying too much tension to the repair! Dr. Wright will write a prescription for you to take to your therapist. If you need help finding a therapist, please let our office know.

BANDAGE

You will have bulky bandage over your operative shoulder. This bandage must stay on until your 1st post-operative visit in our office. Your sutures will be removed on your first office visit approximately 7-10 days post operatively.

*****If it is after business hours and you need immediate assistance, please call 855-NH-SPORT and ask to speak with the Sports Medicine Fellow on call**

SHOWERING

You must keep the incision dry to prevent an infection as it is healing. It is best to take a bath for the first 7-10 days while the bandage is still in place. When the bandage is removed you can cover your shoulder with a plastic bag (use tape if necessary) to keep the area dry. It takes approximately 8 days for the incision to heal enough to get it wet without concern of infection. Do not apply creams, ointment or lotions to your incision while it is still healing (approximately 3 weeks). You should wash under your arm daily.

MEDICATIONS

You will receive a prescription for pain medication prior to your discharge from the hospital. Take one tablet for mild to moderate pain and two tablet for more severe pain. Please make the hospital staff aware of any allergies you may have to avoid medical

complications. You may also receive an anti-inflammatory medication to reduce swelling. This may be taken with your pain medication. If you find that you are constipated from the medications, please feel free to use an over the counter stool softener or laxative.

ICE

Prevention of post-op swelling or inflammation is an important part of your recovery. Apply ice to the surgical site 20 minutes 4 to 6 times a day or use your cryocuff as directed in the instructions. Also, it is important to apply the ice/cryocuff 10-20 minutes after completing your physical therapy. The hospital will supply you with a disposable ice pack or you may purchase your own gel pack or cryocuff if you would like.

NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IMMEDIATELY AT 855-NH-SPORT IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SIGNS OR SYMPTOMS OCCUR:

1. Chest pain or shortness of breath
2. Change is noted to your incision (i.e. increased redness or drainage)
3. Temperature greater than 101.5 degrees
4. Fever, chills, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
5. Stitches loosen or fall out and incisions open up
6. Thick, foul-smelling drainage (yellow or greenish)
7. Increased pain which is not relieved by medications or other measures mentioned above