

Shoulder and Elbow Patient Discharge Education

Your arm will be in some type of sling. Unless otherwise instructed by your physician, you may remove your sling for elbow motion 3 to 4 times a day for 5 to 10 minutes. Use your hand and wrist freely unless otherwise instructed. You will be given a detailed rehabilitation protocol for you and your physical therapist to follow after surgery. Please refer to this sheet for any range of motion or weight bearing restrictions. Take this rehabilitation instruction sheet with you to your first physical therapy appointment.

If swelling in the joint is a major problem, contact your doctor. Common options for treatment of recurrent swelling will include the use of oral anti-inflammatory medication so that pain can be relieved and therapy can be continued. With elbow arthroscopy, elevate your elbow higher than your heart if there is swelling.

Keep the wounds dry until and dressings in place until 72 hours after surgery. After that time, you may shower but **DO NOT SOAK THE INCISIONS UNDERWATER**. You will notice special band-aids on the skin (steri-strips). Leave these in place. The other dressings may be removed. Dry gauze may be placed back over the incisions. Use the compression wrap (elbow only) until it is evident that you do not need it. You will be guided by your physician or therapist. If the wrap feels too tight, loosen it.

If you have pain, use your pain medication as prescribed. Icing will also help reduce pain. You may have received an ice machine. If so, you may use this as instructed. If not, and you have discomfort, place the ice bag on the joint for approximately 20 minutes. Do not place the ice bag directly on the skin. This can be repeated 4 to 5 times per day. Remove immediately if any numbness or tingling occur.

Please wear your compression stockings for two weeks after surgery to reduce the risk of blood clots, which can occur after any surgery.

You will normally have an appointment in this office within one to two weeks after surgery. This appointment should be made before surgery. If not, please make an appointment with your doctor or their physician assistant.

If you have any other questions, please contact your doctor at **(530) 344-2070**.

FOR URGENT ISSUES AFTER HOURS, CONTACT THE PAGE OPERATOR AT (530) 622-1441