

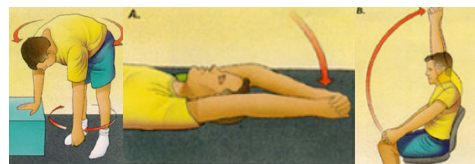


Shoulder Arthroscopy Instructions

1. After arthroscopy the wound is covered with gauze or ace wraps. They should be left in place for 3 days. Due to the large amount of fluid used during arthroscopy, it is normal to see some bloody drainage on the dressings. If bright red blood persists despite elevation and icing, please call the doctor. The dressing should be removed and wounds covered with Band-Aids on the third day after surgery. Do not remove the paper strips over the incision or cut any visible suture. Bruising down into the elbow and chest wall may be expected. The wounds should be kept dry for 3 days. After three days, you may shower and pat the surgical sites dry. DO NOT scrub the area. The wounds should NOT be submerged in a bathtub or pool for 2-3 weeks.
2. Patients are generally more comfortable sleeping in a reclining chair or with pillows elevating the shoulder. Some difficulty with sleeping is common for 2-3 weeks after surgery.
3. Icing is very important for the first 5-7 days postoperative. While the post-op dressing is in place, icing should be continuous. Once the dressing is removed on the first or second day, ice is applied for 20-minute periods 3-4 times per day. Care must be taken with icing to avoid frostbite to the skin.
4. You should arrange an appointment with Physical Therapy within 7 days of surgery for specific instructions. In general, for the first 6 weeks, passive motion only; the arm is in a sling and removed for passive stretching exercises 4-5 times a day. The sling may be removed for waist-level activities, such as eating, dressing, and bathing, but you should avoid reaching, lifting, pushing, and pulling for 6 weeks (3 months for massive tears). Your therapy depends on whether your rotator cuff was repaired or not.

Rotator cuff repaired - If your sling has a pillow under your arm it is meant to relieve pressure on your cuff repair; keep this in place unless bathing and do not actively raise your arm until you see your doctor in clinic. Wear your sling for 5 weeks after repair. Be sure to use and move your hand, wrist, and elbow to decrease swelling in your arm.

No Rotator cuff repair - On the first post-op day, you may begin doing pendulum physical therapy exercises. Remove the sling and move your hand in a small circle at your waist several times a day. You may use your arm to assist with dressing, eating and personal hygiene unless specifically instructed not to by Dr. Jenkins. Be sure to use and move your hand, wrist, and elbow to decrease swelling in your arm. While exercise is important, don't over do it. Common sense is the rule.





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5. The anesthetic drugs used during your surgery may cause nausea for the first 24 hours. If nausea occurs, drink only clear liquids (i.e. Sprite or 7-up). The only solids should be dry crackers or toast. If nausea and vomiting become severe or the patient shows sign of dehydration (lack of urination) please call your doctor. If a block was used for your surgery, wear your sling until sensation returns in your arm. A low-grade fever (100.5) is common in the first 36 hours but unusual beyond. Please call the doctor with any temperature over 101.5 degrees. You may take a baby aspirin (81 mg) a day until you resume your regular activity level. This may lower the risk of a blood clot developing after surgery. Should severe calf pain occur or significant swelling of calf and ankle, please call the doctor.

6. Pain - Local anesthetics (i.e. Novocaine) are put into the shoulder during surgery. Patients may experience more pain on the first or second day after surgery. This is the time when swelling peaks. Use the pain medication as directed to help control pain. If you are not on blood thinners and do not have a history of problems with ulcers or stomach acid problems, you may use over the counter NSAIDs (motrin or aleve) between your narcotic medications to reduce swelling and pain. No medication is capable of taking away all pain. Taking pain medication before bedtime will assist in sleeping. It is important not to drink or drive while taking narcotic medication. If you need a refill : PLEASE PLAN AHEAD. You may call the office during regular hours (8-12) and (2-5). You should resume your medications for other conditions after surgery. There are no specific diet restrictions after surgery but extensive use of narcotics can lead to constipation. A high fiber diet, plenty of fluids, and muscle activity can help prevent constipation.

7. Your doctor will need to reexamine you 7-14 days after shoulder surgery.

8. Seek medical attention immediately (911) if you experience:
 - Chest pain
 - Shortness of breath

Watauga Orthopaedics

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