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## ***Arthroscopic Shoulder Debridement/Decompression/Capsular Release Post-Operative Instructions:***

### **GENERAL**

- You should come out of the sling at least 3 times daily to move your **elbow, wrist, and fingers** (including ball-squeezing).
- Begin doing gentle shoulder **pendulum & stick exercises** (refer to exercise sheet provided).
- Use the cold therapy machine as instructed to decrease pain and swelling.
- If you do not have a cold therapy machine, use ice packs on the surgical site 20 minutes per hour while awake to decrease swelling and diminish pain.
- It can be helpful to sleep with a pillow under the surgical arm for comfort.
- Remember that arthroscopy is performed by pumping in a lot of fluid into the shoulder. Therefore, fluid escaping through the small incisions (“leaking”) is **entirely normal** to occur after surgery.

### **SHOWER**

- You may shower on **post-operative day 3**.
- Be sure to remove the sling and surgical dressings **carefully**.
- Pat dry the incisions after your shower and cover incisional areas with Band-Aids.
- Do **not** put any creams, lotions or antibiotic agents on the wounds.
- You may lift your arm **gently** to apply underarm deodorant.

### **MEDICATIONS**

- Follow Dr. Iyengar’s pain protocol!
- Start taking pain medication when you get home from surgery and then continue to use it **every 4-6 hours** as needed to control the pain.
- It is best to **prevent** post-operative pain by using your medication on a regular basis for the first 24-48 hours after surgery then tapering off.
- Be sure to take a stool softener (Docusate or “Colace”) as prescribed to prevent constipation while you are taking narcotics, as this is a **common side effect**.
- If you experience nausea after surgery, use the medication (Ondansetron or “Zofran”) as prescribed until it resolves typically within 48 hours.
- Take an over-the-counter anti-inflammatory (“NSAID”) medication, ibuprofen (Advil/Motrin) in combination with your narcotic pain medication to reduce inflammation.
- The recommended dose of ibuprofen is 600 mg (3 tablets) by mouth **three** times daily.
- Take ibuprofen **with food** to decrease the risk of stomach irritation.
- Please note, ibuprofen can cause serious GI bleeding so **STOP** taking it if you experience any severe stomach pain or bleeding in your stools and call Dr. Iyengar’s office immediately.

## POST-OPERATIVE VISIT

- You will have your 1<sup>st</sup> post-operative visit **4 to 7 days after surgery**.
- At the visit, your wounds will be inspected, your sutures to the shoulder will be removed and Band-Aids replaced.
- You will be given your post-operative prescription from Dr. Iyengar to start Physical Therapy with all of the guidelines for your therapist to follow.
- We will review your arthroscopic photos to show you what was done at your surgery.
- If you have any questions regarding your surgical recovery, please write them down so that you remember to ask Dr. Iyengar during this appointment

## PHYSICAL THERAPY

- The typical therapy program will be a **minimum** of 6 weeks.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> phase of therapy will be designed to safely regain your range of motion.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of therapy will be directed at regaining function, strength, and endurance.
- Dr. Iyengar will talk to you about the specifics of your physical therapy protocol when he sees you at your 1<sup>st</sup> post-operative visit.
- In some cases, Dr. Iyengar may want you to start physical therapy **immediately** after surgery so you will have your first therapy visit before your post-operative appointment

## WHEN CAN I?

- You may take the sling off for elbow, wrist, and finger exercises the **day after surgery**.
- You can typically stop using the sling between **1-3 days** post-operatively and begin active range of motion to your shoulder as soon as you are comfortable, unless specifically instructed not to do so.
- You will be able to resume driving when your sling comes off and you are **off** narcotic medications.
- While many people attempt to drive earlier than this, keep in mind that you may be considered **legally impaired** if you attempt to drive while in a sling.
- Most patients require **at least** three days to recover from the effects of surgery and anesthesia.
- Some patients may return to work as soon as **4-7 days** post-operatively and others require extensive time away from work if "limited duty" is not available.

## CONTACT OUR OFFICE IF:

- You **do not** already have a follow-up appointment, please call the appointment desk at **(209) 946-7200** to schedule.
- Any signs of infection should be reported immediately: **increased swelling, redness, drainage from incisions (usually thick, cloudy pus, not clear liquid secondary to the arthroscopy), increased warmth, fever greater than 101.8, chills, or severe pain unrelieved by prescribed medications.**