

**SCOTT A. HACKER, M.D.**

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## **POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

### **After your Shoulder Surgery**

#### **Follow Up Appointments**

Before leaving the office today, Alice will make you 3 follow-up appointments. We would prefer to see you in the office at 2 weeks, 6 weeks and 12 weeks after surgery. If needed, changes to this plan can be made.

#### **Post-Operative Care of your Shoulder**

Please follow these instructions carefully. If you have any questions, contact a member of Dr. Hacker's team at 619-286-9480.

#### **Dressing Changes**

Proper dressing changes are key to your success after surgery. You will be supplied with needed materials and instructions before leaving the hospital or surgery center.

- Change your dressing on post-operative day #1, then every other day. Once the wound is completely dry a dressing may be left in place to protect the wound.
- Apply band-aids or other clean dressing to the wounds as needed. The steri-strips will remain over the wounds for 2 weeks. We will replace or remove them at your first follow-up appointment.
- Do **NOT** use bacitracin or other ointments on your incisions.
- With each dressing change, evaluate the incision for excessive drainage, redness surrounding the incision, red streaks, and increased pain. These may be signs of infection. Phone us immediately with any questions or concerns.

#### **Sutures and Staples**

Most often, the sutures used during surgery are made to dissolve with time and are buried under the skin. These require no special care. Some incisions may have 'tags' of suture at either end. We will trim these when you return for your 2 week visit. Staples will also be removed at the 2 week visit with a special staple remover.

#### **Bathing**

Your incisions must be kept dry at all times for the first 2 weeks after surgery. This can be done with a waterproof dressing. After showering, the gauze bandages do not need to be changed unless they become wet. Avoid baths, swimming pools or the ocean for at least 4 weeks and soaking in a hot tub until at least 6 weeks after surgery.

**Your first set of goals:** Control swelling and inflammation  
Regain your motion as appropriate

The following steps will help you reach these goals:

**ICE:** Ice your shoulder 5-6 times a day, 20 minutes at a time. This can be done using the circulating ice cuff, ice packs or frozen peas. Ice is stronger than anti-inflammatory medication. Be diligent about icing! Be sure to ice down your shoulder for about 20 minutes before and after surgery.

**PHYSICAL THERAPY:** Physical therapy begins the day after surgery in most cases and is an essential component of your treatment. You will be given specific exercises to follow at different time frames during the rehabilitative process. Follow these carefully. Different shoulder problems require different kinds of therapy. If you have any questions, please call our office at 619-286-9480 or speak with your therapist. Be diligent about performing your exercises daily—even on days you don't meet with your therapist. Typically, therapy starts with regaining appropriate by stretching with assistance, then on your own, followed by resistance training.

**PRESCRIPTIONS:** You will likely receive three prescriptions to use after surgery. All medicines are best taken with food if possible.

- *Naproxen.* An anti-inflammatory, to be taken twice a day with breakfast and dinner, for 2 weeks after surgery, or if you still have swelling in your shoulder. This may be different if you are already taking an anti-inflammatory.
- *Vicodin.* A narcotic medication, to be used only 'as needed' for pain in addition to the naproxen. Do not use with alcohol, drive while taking pain medication or take any additional Tylenol.
- *Zofran.* A medication to minimize nausea often experienced after a general anesthetic. To be used only 'as needed'
- These may be tailored to your specific needs.

We look forward to helping you get back to your peak potential!