

SHOULDER ARTHROPLASTY DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

WOUND CARE

Your surgical incision is covered with an Aquacel dressing. The Aquacel should remain in place until your surgery follow-up. Do not remove the Aquacel or allow anyone else to remove it including your home health nurse or physical therapist. It is very absorbent and should hold a significant amount of drainage. The center of the Aquacel may turn dark and protrude but this is to be expected and should not cause concern. If it begins leaking, first reinforce the Aquacel with tape or apply additional gauze. If this does not control the drainage, contact our office. You need to contact our office if you notice any increasing redness around the outside borders of the dressing as well. You may shower but do not allow the showerhead to directly hit the Aquacel. Do not get in the tub or submerge the dressing. A certain degree of swelling at the operative site is to be expected even down into your hand. You may apply an ice pack to your shoulder. It can be used up to as many times a day as helpful for no longer than 20 minutes at a time (20 minutes on, 20 minutes off, etc.). Bruising of the shoulder and arm can occur. You may have numbness around the dressing, which is to be expected as well.

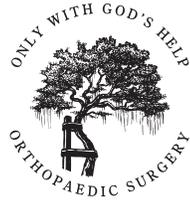
ACTIVITY

Your new shoulder is secure and ready to hold your weight immediately. However, to access the shoulder in surgery, we have to lift up a major tendon and then repair it at the end. This means we will need to allow the tendon to heal before resuming all activity (refer to rehabilitation sheet). Performing your exercises as instructed is very important to your satisfaction and outcome. Until you get a chance to read through the rehabilitation plan, expect to stay in the sling most of the time for the first month, especially while sleeping and when out in crowds. You will need to refrain from driving at least until you are completely off narcotic medication.

EXERCISE

You will want to begin performing your Codman's exercises as taught to you by the therapist in the surgical facility. You should begin formal physical therapy within couple weeks following your surgery in an outpatient therapy center. Home health therapy is also an option but outpatient therapy is preferred. Shoulder rehabilitation is much like driving, you need to stay on the road! The attached protocol has certain exercises for certain time points. Do the exercises you are supposed to do; do NOT do exercises you are not supposed to do. Lack of effort as well as uncontrolled enthusiasm can both veer you off the road and affect your surgical outcome. Stay the course!

INSTRUCTIONS CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



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MEDICATIONS

You have been provided with prescriptions for your pain medication along with a blood thinner (usually Aspirin). Specific instructions for each of these will be on your prescription bottle. Please take the medications only as prescribed. Your pain medications are narcotics and commonly cause constipation, nausea, and insomnia. Please make sure to eat prior to taking the medications and drink plenty of water along with a high fiber diet. You also need to be up and walking to help move your bowels as well. Contact our office with any further questions or issues. Ultimately, the less narcotic medication you take, the better you will feel. **You cannot expect to be pain free.** The narcotic pain medication should be used to help limit the severity of your pain.

RETURNING TO WORK

Depending upon the demands of your job, you may be out of work anywhere from 2-12 weeks. Each patient recovers differently and may require more or less time out of work. Typically, for sedentary work you can return within 2 weeks while the more physically demanding job can take 3-4 months before returning. This will be discussed again at your first surgery follow-up.

SURGERY FOLLOW-UP

You have been scheduled for a surgery follow-up approximately 2 weeks after your surgery. At this appointment you will have your Aquacel removed, and follow up x-rays will be taken. Your physician will assess your incision and speak with you concerning your post-op recovery.

DIET

We ask that you continue a healthy, well-balanced diet following surgery to ensure proper wound healing. Drink plenty of fluids and eat a high fiber, high protein, low carb diet as previously discussed prior to your surgery. For the diabetic patient, continue to take excellent care of your blood sugars and keep them at 120 or less daily by following the proper diet and taking your diabetic medications as prescribed.

CALL THE DOCTOR:

If you experience any of the following, contact us:

- Fever of 100.4 or greater
- Excessive drainage outside of the Aquacel
- Shortness of Breath
- Chest Pain
- Redness outside the borders of the Aquacel