

Patient: _____

Pharmacy: _____

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS – SHOULDER REPLACEMENT

WOUND CARE

- The post-op dressing is water resistant so you may shower right away.
- If it fills with liquid or blood please call us immediately to change it for you.
- Keep dry incisions as dry as possible.
- There may be a small amount of fluid/bleeding leaking at the surgical site. This is normal after surgery.
- Use the Cryocuff or Ice as often as possible for the first 7 days, then as needed for pain relief.
 - Always keep a towel, ACE wrap or other barrier between the cooling unit and your skin.
- Do not soak the incision in water or submerge it.
- Do not go swimming in the pool or ocean until 4 weeks after surgery or when otherwise instructed.

BRACE/EXERCISES

- Wear the sling at all times except when doing your exercises.
- You may remove the sling for showering, but keep the arm across the chest.
- It is ok to come out of your sling if you are sitting and have assistance for eating.
- Do not lift anything heavier than 1 pound until we discuss it further in clinic.
- Please perform the exercises daily:
 - Elbow / Hand / Wrist Range of Motion Exercises
 - Grip Strengthening

REGIONAL ANESTHESIA (NERVE BLOCKS)

- The anesthesia team may have performed a nerve block for you if safe in the setting of your care. This is a great tool used to minimize pain. Typically the block may start wearing off overnight but the long acting medicine may last for 3-4 days. The nerve block wearing off can be a challenging period but please utilize your as needed pain medications to try and manage this period.

POST-OP MEDICATIONS– Multimodal approach to pain control

- In general your pain will be controlled with a combination of substances. Prescriptions unless otherwise discussed are electronically sent to your pharmacy. This is a carefully made plan we use to minimize narcotic use.
 - Meloxicam OR Celebrex - Anti-inflammatory medication taken on a scheduled basis
 - Acetaminophen – Non-narcotic pain medicine taken on a scheduled basis
 - Oxycodone - This is a strong narcotic, to be used only on an “as needed” basis for pain.
 - Aspirin 81mg – This medicine is used to minimize the risk of blood clots after surgery.
 - Omeprazole – daily medicine to protect your stomach while taking anti-inflammatories. This may only be used in higher risk patients.
 - Other: _____

FOLLOW-UP

- If you develop a Fever (≥ 101.5), Redness or Drainage from the surgical incision site, please call the office
- Please call the office to schedule a follow-up appointment for a wound check, 7-10 days post-operatively.

INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEOS:

- You can check out Dr. Varkey’s YouTube page for instructional videos
- Link: <https://tinyurl.com/3d4w3dr3>
- Or scan the QR code ➡

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HELPFUL INFORMATION

- **If you had a block, it will wear off between 8-24 hrs postop typically. This is period when your pain may go from nearly zero to the pain you would have had postop without the block.**
 - **This is an abrupt transition but nothing dangerous is happening.**
 - **You may take an extra dose of narcotic when this happens.**
- We suggest you use the pain medication the first night prior to going to bed, in order to ease any pain when the anesthesia wears off.
- You should avoid taking pain medications on an empty stomach as it will make you nauseous.
- Your arm will be in a sling following surgery. This should be continued until we talk about it in clinic.
- You may be more comfortable sleeping in a semi-seated position the first few nights following surgery. Keep a pillow propped under the elbow and forearm for comfort. If you have a recliner type of chair it might be beneficial. If not that is fine too, but it would be helpful to sleep propped up with pillows behind your operated shoulder as well under your elbow and forearm. This will reduce pulling on the suture lines.
- When dressing, put your operative arm in the sleeve first. When getting undressed, take your operative arm out last. Loose fitting, button-down shirts are recommended. Often in the first days after surgery you may be more comfortable keeping your operative arm under your shirt and not through the sleeve.
- You may return to work/school in the next couple of days when you feel up to it.
 - Desk work and typing in the sling is fine.
- You should wean off your narcotic medicines as soon as you are able.
 - Most patients will be off or using minimal narcotics before their first postop appointment.
- Do not drink alcoholic beverages or take illicit drugs when taking pain medications.
- It is against the law to drive while taking narcotics. In some states it is against the law to drive while your arm is in a sling.
- Pain medication may make you constipated. Below are a few solutions to try in this order:
 - Decrease the amount of pain medication if you aren't having pain.
 - Drink lots of decaffeinated fluids.
 - Drink prune juice and/or eat dried prunes
- If the first 3 don't work start with additional solutions
 - Take Colace – an over-the-counter stool softener
 - Take Senokot – an over-the-counter laxative
 - Take Miralax – a stronger over-the-counter laxative