

Postoperative Instructions for Dr. Alford's Shoulder Surgery

Medication

Only take the pain medication that Dr. Alford has prescribed for you. You will be unable to receive more medication if you finish the pills too soon. A prescription for Reglan 10mg should be filled if you are experiencing nausea and vomiting after surgery. Your pain medication can also make you nauseated if taken on an empty stomach, so take it with food.

Ice machines and / or bags of ice

Ice your shoulder 4-5 times a day for 20 minutes at a time. We recommend that you do this at least for the first 3 days.

Follow-up appointment

Call today or tomorrow (401-738-3730) to schedule a follow up appointment for 7-10 days. During this visit you will have your sutures removed, review arthroscopic photographs, and receive a referral to physical therapy.

Slings and Braces

Please wear your sling or brace at all times until your follow up appointment with Dr. Alford. Only remove your sling for PT, home exercises and bathing. To bathe under your surgical arm, lean forward from your waist and allow your arm to fall forward to wash under your arm. Do not lean to the side. You can put a washcloth under your arm for comfort if you choose.

Home exercises 3 times per day during the first week

- * Move your wrist and squeeze red sponge ball (provided) to promote circulation.
- * Carefully remove sling and hang arm straight down at your side with your elbow straight. Do not attempt to lift your arm. Use your normal arm to lift your surgical arm back into the sling.

Driving

Please do not drive for 4-6 weeks or as otherwise told by Dr Alford. You should not drive while you are taking narcotic medication (Vicodin, OxyContin, etc).

Incision / dressing care

You can change your dressing in two (2) days. Remove the old bandage and you will see old blood and butterfly strips (Steri-strips). Leave the strips in place. DO NOT PUT any alcohol, lotions, or any other medications on your sutures. You can clean AROUND the area with a CLEAN washcloth and soap and water ONLY. Cover the area with a clean dressing (4X4) from the drug store.

When to call the Doctor

If you have a fever above 101.5, chills, sweats, excessive bleeding (example: you had to change the dressing twice), foul odor, excessive redness, excruciating pain, yellow or green discharge, or if you think you have an infection call 401-738-3730 ask to speak to Dr Alford's Assistant. Evenings, nights and weekends, ask the service to page the covering orthopedic surgeon on-call, or go to your local emergency room.

For more information, visit our website: www.westbayortho.com.