

## Post-Operative Instructions – Rotator Cuff Repair

### Diet

- Following surgery, nausea is very common. Begin with clear liquids and progress to your daily diet as tolerated.

### Wound Management

- A bandage is applied to the operative site. Keep this in place for 48 hours after surgery.
- It is normal for there to be drainage and for the dressing to become blood tinged. If this occurs, reinforce with additional dressing.
- Remove the dressing after the 2<sup>nd</sup> post-operative day. It is still normal for there to be some drainage from the incision. Apply steri-strips or band-aids to the incision sites.
- Do not shower until after the dressing is removed. No baths or hot tubs!
- Do not use any topical agents over the incision sites.
- Sometimes small incisions are made that do not require suture closure. Please do not be alarmed by this.

### Activity

- Please bring your sling with you to surgery. You should wear the sling at all times unless you are showering or performing elbow, wrist and hand or pendulum exercises. Pendulum exercises may be performed the day after surgery.
- Sling will likely be worn for 4-6 weeks following surgery.
- A ball is provided with your sling. Squeeze the ball to reduce swelling in the hand.
- You are encouraged to walk in a controlled environment in order to avoid prolonged sitting.
- No driving until instructed by your physician.
- Sleeping may be done in a reclining chair or bed with the use of pillows to support the operative site as tolerated.
- Generally, if you have a desk job you may return to work on the third post-operative day.
- Return to a physically demanding job will be discussed at your post-operative visit.
- Physical therapy may begin after your first post-operative visit.

### Ice/Cryotherapy

- Ice should be used for 30 minute increments 4-5x a day as tolerated.

## Medication

- Pain medication: Most patients require the use of narcotic pain medication for a period of time after surgery. You are encouraged to take your prescribed pain medication as indicated on the bottle regardless of pain level for the first 24 hours after surgery.
- Anti-Inflammatory Medication: You may take an over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medication (Ibuprofen or Advil, up to 600mg up to 3 times daily) after surgery in addition to your pain medication, unless you have a history of stomach ulcers. If you are not taking pain medication, you may still take an anti-inflammatory medication for inflammation, pain and swelling. Common side effects of pain medication include: nausea, insomnia, itching, constipation, drowsiness, and hallucinations. Take medications with food to reduce side effects. Do not drive or operate machinery while taking narcotic pain medication.
- Nerve Block: If you received an inter-scalene nerve block, numbness and loss of function may persist for up to 24 hours after surgery.

## Post-Operative

- Your post-operative appointment will be 7-10 days after your surgery.

## Emergencies

- **If at any time you have questions or emergent concerns, contact Dr. Trenhaile, or his Physician Assistant Michael Gilbertson, PA-C at (815-398-9491).**
- If you are calling after hours or over a weekend you will be directed to the physician answering service and you may be called by the physician or physician assistant on call.
- Please call if any of the following arise:
  - Fever over 101 (it is normal to have a low grade fever for the first 1-2 days after surgery)
  - Redness
  - Painful swelling
  - Numbness
  - Shortness of breath
  - Excessive bleeding and/or drainage from incision sites.
- If you require immediate attention, go to the nearest emergency room

**If you have any questions, please call Dr. Trenhaile's Nurse – Kari or Clinical Assistant - Alyssa at 815-381-7313. After hours (normal clinic hours are 8am-5pm), please call 815-398-9491.**