



Duke Orthopaedics: Upper Extremity Division

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Discharge Instructions after Total Shoulder Arthroplasty

A sling has been provided for you. Only remove the sling to perform the motion exercises (attached). You will be given further instructions on sling use at your first postoperative visit. Use ice on the shoulder intermittently over the first 48 hours after surgery.

Pain medication has been prescribed for you. Take a stool softener (Colace, Dulcolax or Senakot) if you are using narcotic pain medications.

Use your medication liberally as directed over the first 48 hours, and then begin to taper your use. You may take Extra Strength Tylenol or Tylenol only in place of the pain pills.

DO NOT take ANY nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory pain medications:

Advil, Motrin, Ibuprofen, Aleve, Naproxen, or Naprosyn.

You may remove your dressing after two days, but leave the steri-strips in place. They will fall off on their own.

You may shower 5 days after surgery. The incision CANNOT get wet prior to 5 days. Simply allow the water to wash over the site and then pat dry. Do not rub the incision. Make sure your axilla (armpit) is completely dry after showering.

Take one 325mg aspirin a day for 6 weeks after surgery, unless you have an aspirin sensitivity/allergy or asthma.

Active reaching and lifting are not permitted. You may use the operative arm for activities of daily living that do not require the operative arm to leave the side of the body, such as eating, drinking, bathing, etc.

If you have any problems:

During business hours call the office: 919- 403 3057

After hours call and ask for the orthopaedic resident on call: 919-684-8111

Concerning findings:

Excessive redness of the incisions

Drainage for more than 4 days after surgery

Fever of more than 101.5°F