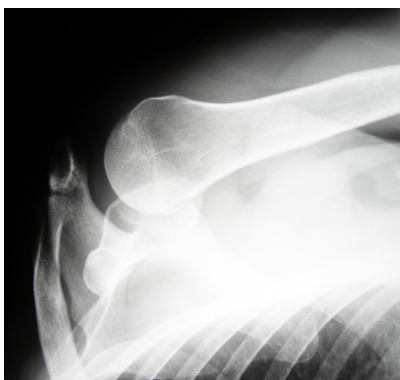


Post-Surgery Recovery from SHOULDER ARTHROSCOPY



A Guide for Patients...and
Their Caregivers



SM&C

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DIVISION OF SOUTHEASTERN ORTHOPAEDIC SPECIALISTS

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

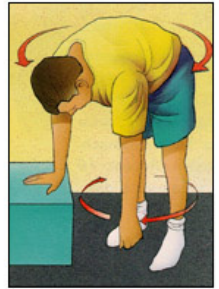
While shoulder arthroscopy is much less invasive than traditional open shoulder surgery, it may still take several weeks to fully recover. To hasten your recovery and ensure maximum joint function, be sure to carefully follow these post-surgery instructions after you return home.

▶ **Until Friday**, keep your shoulder elevated above the level of your heart for as much time as possible by lying on several pillows or sitting in a recliner. Apply ice to the shoulder (20 minutes on, then 20 minutes off) to help relieve pain and swelling.

▶ **A few times each day**, remove the sling and exercise your shoulder and elbow.

- Fully bend and straighten the elbow of the affected arm several times.

- Perform “pendulum” exercises with the affected arm: from a standing position, bend over at the waist using a table for support and letting the affected arm hang down. Rotate your arm in a clockwise motion, so the arm swings in a circle 10 times. Then rock counterclockwise, making 10 circles in the opposite direction.



▶ **On Friday Morning**, remove the hospital dressing by cutting the piece that is doubled over in the front and just peeling the rest off. You may then take a shower, but do not soak in a tub. Afterwards, carefully dry the incisions and put band-aids over them. Continue to wear your sling.

▶ **On Tuesday**, I will need to see you to check your progress and begin a postoperative treatment program. If you have not already set up that appointment, please call the office at (336) 275-6318 and do so.

PAIN MEDICATIONS

You will be given 2 prescriptions for pain: a narcotic painkiller and an anti-inflammatory. Take them both. The anti-inflammatory helps to relieve pain and can significantly reduce the amount of the narcotic you will need to take.

- ▶ **Do not get behind on taking the pain meds-** It is easier ...and actually requires less medication... to keep pain suppressed than to relieve severe pain.
- ▶ **If you experience nausea or vomiting,** it may be due to the pain medication or to the anesthesia used during surgery. Wait 4 to 6 hours for the anesthesia to wear off. If you still are having a problem, call the office at (336) 275-6318 well before 9 PM, so the answering service can put you in touch with the covering physician while pharmacies are still open. He or she can order a different pain medication or something for the nausea.
- ▶ **After the first night, DO NOT CALL AFTER HOURS FOR PAIN MEDICATION. NO NARCOTICS CAN BE CALLED IN AFTER HOURS OR ON WEEKENDS.**



COMPLICATIONS AND CONCERNS

Potential problems following shoulder arthroscopy include infection, blood clots, and accumulation of blood in the shoulder, but are rare (less than 1%) and generally not serious. In case of emergency, call the office and the answering service will put you in touch with the Doctor on call.

DO NOT BE ALARMED if you experience:

- ▶ **Clear or bloody drainage**, which is very common within 48 hours after surgery
- ▶ **Warmth in the shoulder**, which can last for several days and is due to inflammation
- ▶ **A low-grade fever (up to 100.5°)** - take some Tylenol and do some coughing and deep breathing

If you have any other questions, I will be happy to answer them at your follow-up appointment this Tuesday, or you can check our website at www.sosbonedocs.com.



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