

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Rotator Cuff Repair

STEPHEN M. DESIO, M.D.

- 1) After your rotator cuff surgery, there will be a bulky bandage over your shoulder and your arm will be in a sling with a small pillow attached. This sling takes the pressure off the repaired tendons. It is to remain on at all times unless told to you by Dr. Desio that it may be removed.
- 2) The sling may be worn outside your clothes. To dress, place the operative arm in a button type shirt first. Then insert the nonoperative arm and button shirt. Then, place arm in brace and secure both straps of sling until snug. One strap will go around your waist like a belt, the second will go over your other shoulder like a sling. Each strap has a tag with a label for adjusting to comfort.
- 3) A Cold Therapy Cold Pack may be placed on top of your bandage after surgery. This is connected to a cooler that you will fill with ice and water. Cryotherapy is also known as cold therapy. This is the treatment of pain and/or inflammation by lowering the temperature of the skin over the affected area. It is probably the oldest form of pain control! In addition, it can significantly improve swelling after an injury or surgery.



The gray pad is placed on your shoulder after the bandage is applied. The blue tube is connected to the cooler and ice water will automatically circulate through the pad to decrease pain and inflammation from surgery. The pad and cooler are yours to keep. Do not bring them to the office unless you are having problems with them.

- 4) You may remove your bandage and take a shower with your stitches 2 days after surgery as long as there is no drainage from the incision sites. If you notice drainage from the sites, hold off on getting them wet until they are completely dry. Place Band-Aids over the incisions once per day until they are fully healed. Do not soak incisions in water. No swimming or bath for 7 days after surgery.

5) **MEDICATIONS:**

- a) You may have had a nerve block before surgery. This may provide numbness of your shoulder, arm, and hand for up to 24 hours. When the nerve block wears off, expect an increase in your pain.

- b) You will be given a prescription for a pain killer that is a narcotic. This is usually Percocet, Roxicet, Oxycodone, or something similar.
 - c) Pain Management is very important during the first few days after surgery. To prevent the pain from getting ahead of you, take your pain medication regularly for the first 24 hours until the nerve block has worn off.
 - d) A stool softener is recommended i.e. Colace. One of the most common side effects of pain medications is nausea and constipation.
 - e) If you experience nausea, it is most commonly a side effect of the Percocet, and the anesthesia. Please call the office and we will phone in medication for the nausea.
 - f) Although blood clots are rare, you should take a baby Aspirin a day, starting the day of surgery, for 2 weeks after surgery to reduce the risk.
 - g) Contact the office if you have any redness or excessive drainage at the incision sites.
- 6) A prescription will be given for pain medication. If you feel it is too strong or you do not need it, Tylenol[®], Advil[®], Ibuprofen, or Aleve[®] may be used instead, as long as you do not have any allergies to these medications.
- 7) Contact the office if you have any redness or excessive drainage at the incision sites.
- 8) EXERCISE: Depending on the extent of the tear, your physical therapy will begin between one and three weeks after the surgery.
- 9) The shoulder has the greatest mobility of any joint in the human body. Recovery from surgery is dependent upon the size of the tear, quality of tissue, quantity of tissue to repair, and general health of each patient. Complete recovery from rotator cuff surgery can take 6 months to one year. Patience and hard work will result in better chances of success.

If you have any questions, please call:
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