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Post-Operative Instructions: Total Shoulder Arthroplasty

Activity/Hospital Stay

- Rest the day of surgery.
- You will begin physical therapy on the first day after your procedure. Dr. Alaia will instruct the therapists what exercises you can and cannot do.
- Typically the procedure requires a hospital stay of about two to three days, but this depends on the progress you make both medially as well as with physical therapy.
- You will likely have a Cryo-Cuff ice machine on the shoulder when you come out of the operating room. You will be instructed on how to use this.
- You will be discharged with a sling. You will not be able to drive with the sling on. Usually, patients may return to driving about 6 weeks after the procedure. Please take note that is illegal to drive in a sling.
- Return to work is dependent on the demands of the job. Usually, patients can return to desk work about 4-7 days after the procedure. More physically demanding work should be avoided until cleared by the doctor.
- You may remove the sling for showering as well as to do your elbow, wrist and finger motion exercises. However, you **must** wear the sling while in public as well as when sleeping (usually about 4-6 weeks), to avoid complications. It may be helpful to sleep upright in a chair with a pillow behind the affected shoulder, which will help with post-operative pain.

Pain Medication

- Pain is common post-operatively for several weeks.
- Your narcotic pain medication prescribed for you should be started immediately after your surgery, when the block from anesthesia wears off, which is typically 12-18 hours after the procedure. You may take 1-2 tablets every four hours as needed for pain.
- Take your pain medication *regularly* for the first 2-3 days after surgery (even if your pain is mild) in order to avoid rebound pain. Then, wean yourself to an “as needed” dosing regimen.
- Constipation is a common side effect from narcotic pain medication. Over the counter Miralax (Polyethylene Glycol) can alleviate this symptom.
- If you have any side effects from a medication we have prescribed, discontinue its use and call our office.
- No not drink alcoholic beverages while taking narcotic pain medications.

Physical Therapy

- You will begin physical therapy during the first week after the procedure. The office will help arrange this.
- Typically, physical therapy will last for a minimum of 3 months. The first phase includes regaining range of motion while the later stages include specific functional and strengthening exercises.

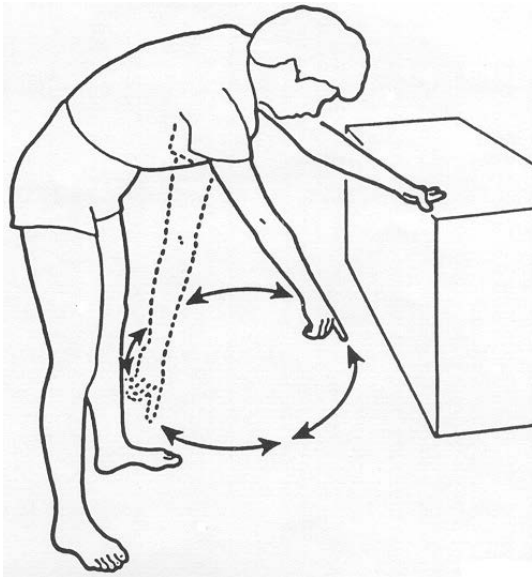
Showering/Dressings/Incisions

- Before you leave the hospital, the incision will be covered with a dry bandage. **Do not** get the incision dirty or wet.
- The dressing may be changed daily. It is not uncommon for there to be a small amount of blood on the dressing.
- Swelling and bruising in the surgical area is also common after the procedure.
- Do not shower or get into a bath until you return for the first follow-up visit, as this is the critical healing time for the incision.
- When cleared to shower, **do NOT** scrub the surgical incisions. Use soap on your neck and let the soapy water run down onto the shoulder.
- Try your best to keep your forearm against your stomach while you shower.
- When done showering, pat the incisions dry with a towel and again, do not scrub. You will have steri-strips on the wound and these will fall off on their own.
- **Do not bathe or go into a Jacuzzi for the first 3-4 weeks** unless directed to do so by the physician.
- The free ends of the suture will be removed at the first follow-up, typically between 7 and 10 days from the procedure.

Follow-up

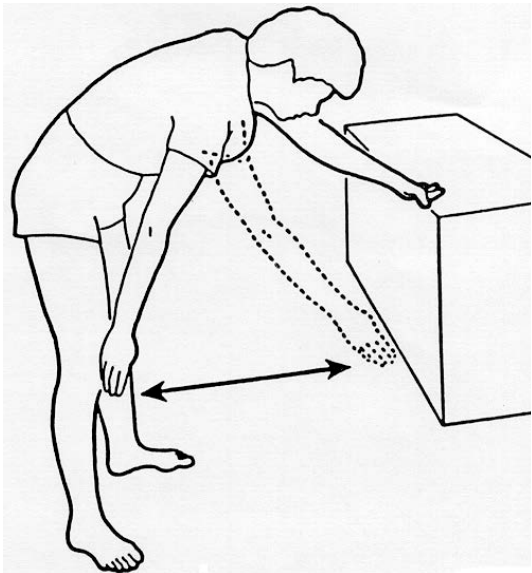
- Please call the office to arrange the follow-up visit. You should be seen between 7 and 10 days from the initial surgery unless otherwise instructed by Dr. Alaia. You will have another X-ray taken at this time.
- Call the office if you develop any of the following:
 - Fever > 101.0 degrees Fahrenheit
 - If the skin around the incisions becomes very red or develops a discharge, or if the incision opens
 - If you develop difficulty breathing or chest pain, report to your local emergency room.

Phase I Shoulder Exercises



Pendulums:

Come out of your sling.
Stand supporting yourself on a table with your good arm. Let your other arm hang down completely relaxed and slowly move it in a circular motion both clockwise and counter clockwise. Keep your circles within the width of your feet.
Perform for 1-2 minutes 3-5 times a day as tolerated.



Codman's Exercises:

Come out of your sling.
Stand supporting yourself on a table with your good arm. Let your other arm hang down completely relaxed and slowly move it in a forward and backward motion.
Perform for 1-2 minutes 3-5 times a day as tolerated

Elbow Curls:

Come out of your sling. Without any extra weight, use your good hand to help bring your other hand towards your shoulder by bending your elbow. Then slowly lower your arm back to a straight position. Then repeat.

Do 3 sets of 10 bends three to four times a day.

Wrist Curls:

While in and out of your sling, make a light fist and move your operative wrist in an up and down movement slowly like you are knocking on a door.

Do 3 sets of 10 bends three to four times a day.

Ball Squeezes:

While in and out of your sling, squeeze the foam ball to exercise the hand, fingers, and wrist muscles.

Do 3 sets of 10 squeezes three to four times a day.