

## Post Op Total/Hemi Shoulder Instructions

### **Instructions:**

#### **Activity Level:**

Your shoulder is to remain in the sling/pillow except when doing pendulum exercises. Keep your sling on until your first post-operative visit with your doctor, even while sleeping. At that time, your doctor will let you know when it is safe for you to be out of the sling. Do not attempt to drive until released to do so by your doctor. Do not use the arm for any lifting, pushing or pulling activities.

#### **Exercises:**

Your doctor has shown you several exercises you can do until your first post-operative visit. These include elbow, wrist, hand, and finger range of motion exercises. You should also do shoulder pendulum exercises as instructed by your doctor or therapist. You must avoid externally rotating the arm past neutral or straight out to protect the muscle (subscapularis) repair.

#### **Ice/Elevation:**

You should apply ice packs to the shoulder for twenty minutes at a time, after placing a washcloth on the skin/dressing first. Some patients find it more comfortable to sleep in a reclining chair the first few weeks. Some swelling and bruising is to be expected. Ice cuff machines are used in some cases.

#### **Dressing:**

Keep your dressing clean and dry. A small amount of bloody drainage on the bandage is to be expected. If you are concerned that it is excessive or needs changing, call our office. The Aquacel dressing can be removed 7 days after surgery. Cover the incision with a clean/dry gauze dressing.

#### **Bathing:**

You may shower immediately if you have the thick Aquacell dressing over the wound. Please do not soak the incision for at least 10 days. Do not place ointment or Neosporin the wound unless told otherwise.

#### **Diet:**

Drink fluids initially and advanced to light foods the first day, as tolerated. If you become nauseated and cannot keep down fluids, call our office.

#### **Medications:**

Resume your regular medications unless directed otherwise. Take aspirin 325 mg once a day for 1 month post-operatively to help prevent blood clots. If you take blood thinners, consult with your surgeon. Please take your post-operative pain medications as prescribed on the bottle. Do not take on an empty stomach. Guard against constipation by taking a stool softener (see constipation protocol). If you are having difficulty controlling your pain with the prescription you have been provided, please contact our office.

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### **Deep Breathing Exercises:**

- It is important that you do coughing and deep breathing as instructed to keep your lungs open while you heal. If you do not practice deep breathing and coughing after surgery you may develop lung problems, like pneumonia.
- To perform deep breathing exercises, take a slow, deep breath in through your nose. Hold your breath for 2-5 seconds, and then gently and slowly breathe out through your mouth with pursed lips (like blowing out a candle). REPEAT 10-15 times every ½ hour while awake.
- Do not hold back a cough; this is your body's way of clearing secretions from your lungs that can lead to pneumonia.

**DO NOT** Drive, operate hazardous machinery, drink alcoholic beverages, or make important personal or business decisions for 24 hours after surgery, or while taking your pain medication.

### **Report these signs immediately to your doctor:**

Excessive swelling/redness around your incisions, temperature of 101.5 or higher, excessive pain, excessive drainage of blood or fluid, uncontrolled nausea or vomiting.

Again, you should avoid rotating the arm outwards to protect the tendon repair. This position of external rotation will be explained by the doctor or physical therapist.

Have a responsible adult remain with you for the first 48 hours after surgery. If you have any questions or concerns before your next scheduled appointment, please call my office at 541-472-0603.