

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR PATIENTS AFTER
ROTATOR CUFF REPAIR
J. THEODORE SCHWARTZ, JR., M.D.**

DO NOT DRIVE OR OPERATE MACHINERY FOR 24 HOURS.

Some anesthetics have delayed metabolism and can interfere with the ability to perform these tasks.

DO NOT DRINK ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES FOR 24 HOURS.

DO NOT MAKE IMPORTANT DECISIONS OR SIGN LEGAL DOCUMENTS UNTIL THE NEXT DAY.

DO NOT EAT HEAVY OR LARGE MEALS UNTIL THE NEXT DAY.

A heavy meal may be difficult to digest. Spicy and greasy foods should be avoided.

DO NOTIFY PHYSICIAN IF YOU HAVE NOT VOIDED WITHIN SIX HOURS.

General Information: At the time of your surgery, an interscalene block is placed by the anesthesiologist. Following this procedure, your shoulder and arm will be numb, and you will not be able to move your hand and elbow. This will wear off between 6 and 24 hours after surgery. You may also experience fluid drainage from the incisions the first day after surgery. This is because arthroscopy is performed by "pumping" water into your shoulder. It is also common to have an elevated temperature the first 24-48 hours after surgery. Tylenol is recommended to reduce fever. However, do not take additional Tylenol if you are taking a prescription pain medicine containing Tylenol. It is also recommended that you take deep breaths and cough every hour to expand your lungs.

Pain Management

Take the prescribed medication for pain. Follow the directions on the package. If there are any questions regarding the pain medication, please call our office. If you wish, you may take over-the-counter pain medication such as acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (Advil, Nuprin, or Motrin), or naproxen (Aleve) instead. **It is recommended that you take pain medication with food.**

Icing and Elevation

If you have been fitted with a Polar-Care device, which circulates cold water around your shoulder for pain relief and control of post-operative swelling, you may use this device continuously for the first three to five days and then as needed thereafter. You will need to refill the thermos with ice water as necessary. Otherwise, ice your shoulder with icepacks 30 minutes per hour for the first 48 hours following surgery.

Dressings

Special waterproof dressings have been applied to your incisions. You may remove the dressings four days after surgery. Place waterproof band-aids over the incisions for bathing.

Showering

You may shower with the special waterproof dressings. Avoid soaking or scrubbing the incision for two weeks.

Activities

Wear the sling until your next appointment. Move your fingers, wrist, and elbow activity at least 5 times a day. We will tell you when it is okay to resume housework, yard work, and sporting activities

Driving

You may begin driving short distances at 3 weeks.

Follow-up

You should have a follow-up appointment for approximately 10 days after surgery. If you do not have a follow-up appointment, please call the office to arrange one.

If something seems wrong or out of the ordinary, please contact the office at (925) 355-7350.

CALL PHYSICIAN IMMEDIATELY IF YOU:

- ✓ Observe excessive bleeding, drainage, redness, or swelling;
- ✓ Develop unexpected numbness, coldness, or change of color at operative site;
- ✓ Have extreme pain not relieved by prescribed pain medication, or a medication causes a reaction;
- ✓ Notice a foul odor emanating from surgical site, or have a temperature of 101° F or higher.
- ✓ If it is an emergency and you cannot reach your physician, go to the nearest emergency room or dial 911.