Rotator Cuff or Labral Repair

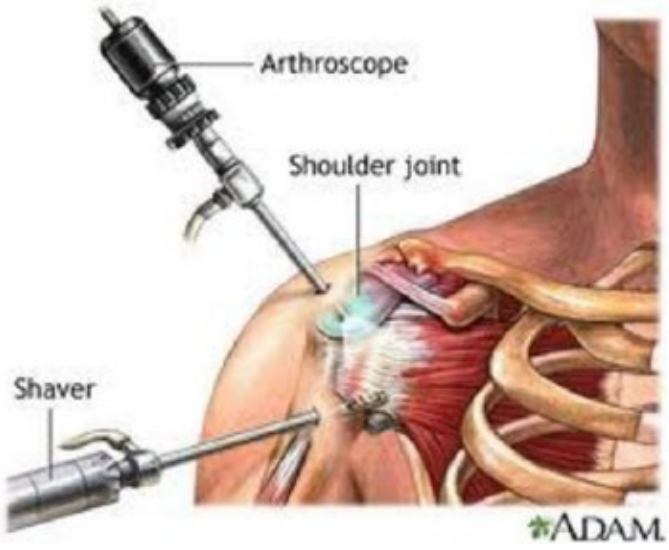
DR. EASTWOOD

Postoperative Instructions for Shoulder Arthroscopy

You had a shoulder arthroscopy (scope). This surgical procedure uses small incisions to locate, identify and treat problems inside the shoulder. These problems include shoulder pain, shoulder instability, labral tear or rotator cuff tear.

During surgery, sterile fluid, such as normal saline (a fluid containing sodium and chloride), is flushed through the shoulder joint. This causes the joint space to expand, allowing the doctor to see and freely work in the joint space. During surgery, some of the fluid is absorbed into surrounding tissue and may seep back out onto your dressing the first day after surgery.

Shoulder surgeries tend to be very painful, so it is important to take pain medication as directed to help keep the pain under control.



Wound Care

- Keep dressing clean, dry and intact.
- Call your doctor if you have a fever over 100.4°F.
- Call your doctor if you notice pus or red streaks coming from the wound.
- Call your doctor if you notice increased redness or swelling around the wound.
- Call your doctor if you notice increasing bleeding from the wound.
- Your wound is covered with gauze and tape, which should remain in place for 48 hours.
- After 48 hours, you should remove the gauze and tape and cover the incision sites with adhesive bandages. Do not remove any steri-strips (thin pieces of white tape) or cut any suture that you may see.
- After 48 hours, you may take a shower. You may clean the wound with mild soap and water, then pat dry. Don't rub the incision sites.
- The adhesive bandages should be changed daily or if they are dirty.
- It is normal to see some bloody drainage on the dressings after surgery due to the large amount of fluid used during the procedure. However, if you notice large amounts of bright red blood seeping out onto the dressing despite icing, please call your doctor.

If you have any problems or questions, please call your doctor's office (8am-5pm).

Answering service for after hours.

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Medications

- It is common to encounter more pain on the first or second day due to swelling.
- Using pain medication as directed will help to control the pain.
- It is important not to drink alcohol or drive while taking narcotic medications, such as Norco or Percocet.
- Do not take Tylenol while taking narcotics, such as Norco or Percocet, as these medications contain Tylenol.

Activity

- Icing is very important for the first 7 days after surgery.
- Ice should be applied for 20 minutes and then removed for 20 minutes.
- It is common to have difficulty sleeping for the first 2-3 weeks after surgery. You may be more comfortable sleeping in a recliner or with pillows propped behind your shoulder for the first 2-3 weeks after surgery.

- Your arm should remain in the sling. Some passive motion of the elbow is OK to prevent stiffness.
- When showering, the arm should stay at your side. You may lean over to wash under the arm. Dry, dress and put the sling on. Shirts that are short-sleeve and button in the front may be easier for the first few weeks.
- To help decrease swelling and keep blood flowing through your arm, it is a good idea to move your wrist in circles and pump your hand into fists 10-30 times an hour. Exercise is important, but do not overdo it.
- You will start therapy after your first office visit.

Preventing Blood Clots

- Walking around will help the blood circulate and prevent blood clots.
- While sitting or lying down, move your feet in a circle or pump your feet up and down 10-30 times an hour.
- If you notice redness, tenderness or swelling in your calf muscles, call your doctor right away.

Diet

- Pain medications can cause constipation.
- To help prevent constipation, you can try a high-fiber diet with lots of fluids.

Nerve Block

- If you had a nerve block, your arm may be numb for the next 12-24 hours.
- Start taking pain medication on a regular schedule the evening of the surgery. Do not wait until the block wears off to start taking pain medication or it will be too difficult to catch up with pain control.

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