

## **Subacromial/AC Joint Decompression**

### **Home Care Instructions**

*Shoulder arthroscopies are some of the most common procedures we perform, and the vast majority of patients get back to full activity quickly. The instructions below are general; however, if at any point you have questions, or something feels amiss, please do not hesitate to contact myself or one of my staff members.* *-Dr. Michael C. Russonella*

- Sling** You will go home with your arm positioned in a sling. Remove the sling tomorrow and begin to move your shoulder, as tolerated. Continue to wear for comfort for 2 -3 days then discontinue.
- Diet & Activity** Resume your normal diet as tolerated. Go home and rest today. If you received sedation or general anesthesia, you may feel tired and drowsy. Therefore, you should not drive a car, operate machinery, drink alcoholic beverages or make any legal decisions for 24 hours, or while taking the narcotic medication. Thereafter, it is critically important that you move your shoulder. Start with pendulums out of the sling (swinging the arm to gravity) and advance as tolerated. Weight-bearing as tolerated to your operative upper extremity. The results of this surgery will not be as successful if you do not move your shoulder. Motion of your hand, wrist and elbow along with the shoulder, will help the arm recover from surgery. You will have had a nerve block with surgery. As anesthesia has mentioned, this will last for up to 24 hours or longer if an indwelling catheter was placed. Use this period to move your shoulder as much as possible.
- Pain Medication** Resume all medications, as prescribed, unless otherwise advised. You will be given a prescription for narcotic pain medicine before you leave the hospital. Take this medication only if you need to relieve severe pain. Only take one pill every four hours with food. If your pain is not relieved by one pill, you may take two pills at your next dose. You may also use an over the counter medicine if you choose such as Aleve, Tylenol, or Advil. Use caution when taking narcotic medications, because they affect your ability to drive and concentrate. Also take 2000mg Vitamin C until wound is fully healed.
- Wound Care & Showering** Shoulder arthroscopy involves pumping fluid into your shoulder at high pressure. This can cause bruising and sometimes even bruising extending down the arm. This is normal and will resolve. Use the sling for comfort during transit. Keep the dressing clean and dry. If it becomes wet or soiled, report to the office for a dressing change. Leaving a wet or soiled dressing in place can predispose to infection. The dressing will be removed and changed prior to your first post-op visit. Apply ice NOT heat. Heat will increase pain/swelling. Do not apply creams or salves to the wound; this can increase the risk of infection. You may shower in 72 hours after your dressing has been changed. Keep the bandages on when you shower. Do not immerse in water for at least one week. After showering, change the bandages and cover the incisions.
- Ice** Ice is an excellent source of relief of pain, swelling, stiffness, and inflammation. Use it as often as 15-20 minutes three times a day. You may continue to use ice several weeks following surgery. **DO NOT USE HEAT!**
- Return Visits** The office will call you to schedule your post-operative appointments.
- Emergency** Dr. Russonella's staff is available 24 hours a day in case you experience any problems once you leave the hospital. The risk of infection is very low risk. Notify the office if you develop a fever >101°F, with unusual increase in pain, redness, and warmth. Report any pus or unusual drainage to our office immediately. It could be a concern if your incisions swell or have drainage. If you encounter any problems, please call our office.
- \*\* If you feel chest pain or shortness of breath, please go to the nearest ER for evaluation. Do not call the office or wait for an appointment; although extremely rare, this could be a blood clot in the lungs.\*\***