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Post Operative Instructions:
Shoulder Arthroscopy

Overview: You have undergone a shoulder arthroscopy (scope) using a small fiber-optic telescope to perform surgery. This is done through small incisions the size of buttonholes.

1. Diet: Begin with liquids, then resume regular diet as you can tolerate.
2. Activity: If you have had an arthroscopy with a cleanup of the joint and/or bone spur removal you may use the sling for comfort and stop using it when you feel it is no longer necessary. Sleeping with your upper body slightly propped up may be more comfortable for you. You may shower on the third day. For your own safety please do not drink alcohol, operate hazardous equipment or make important decisions for 24 hours. You may use the arm for activities of daily living as you feel comfortable to do so. Do not lift heavy objects or attempt to use the arm overhead.
3. Wound Care: It is important to keep your wound dry for the first 3 days, keeping it covered with plastic wrap for showers. You may change your dressing if needed. Please apply band-aids to the incision if it is small. If it is larger, use small gauze dressings. Remove the dressings before you shower and put a clean one on the wound afterwards. If there are steri-strips on the incision do not remove them. In the shower, after three days, just let the water run on the shoulder and pat it dry afterwards. You should not scrub the shoulder. Please do not take a bath, go in a Jacuzzi or go swimming until this has been approved by your surgeon during your first follow up visit.
4. Pain Control: After shoulder surgery you may notice there is a significant amount of pain and swelling. This is normal and usually diminishes after the first few days. The pain will respond best to rest, ice, elevation and the pain medicine you were given. Apply ice or use the circulating ice cuff regularly (20 minutes every 2 hours for as many days as it helps you).

You have been prescribed _____ for pain. Use the medication as prescribed and DO NOT DRIVE, DRINK ALCOHOL OR PERFORM DUTIES THAT REQUIRE CONCENTRATION OR MANUAL DEXTERITY WHILE ON THE MEDICATION. Take the medication with food or milk. Additionally aspirin or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) may be taken for swelling and/or pain if there is no history of allergy or ulcer disease. Some patients have found Benadryl to be an effective alternative for pain control and nausea. I recommend one to two Benadryl tablets (25 to 50 mg) every 4-6 hours as an adjunct to your prescription. These can be used in combination with either or both the pain medication and ibuprofen. if you do not have any allergies to or difficulties with these.

5. Driving: Do not drive until after your first follow up appointment. Do not drive under the influence of narcotic pain medicine.
6. Work/School: You may return to work/school as soon as you are comfortable to do so. You will not be allowed to do any heavy lifting or over head activity for at least 4 weeks. If you require a written note, please ask your physician for one at the time of your visit.

7. Follow-up Appointment: The photographs from the surgery should be available at our first post-operative visit for review. These help demonstrate the extent of the injury, and the steps taken surgically to address it. The date and time of the follow up appointment is listed on the pre-operative letter. If you have not scheduled this appointment please call my office at 781-279-7040 between the hours of 8:30 A.M. and 5:00 P.M.

8. Physical Therapy: Begin doing the following exercises the day after surgery. Complete them at least 3 times a day. Start gradually and work your way up to 3 sets of 10 for all the exercises each time you do them.

Hand – make a tight fist and then straighten your fingers out all the way.

Wrist – Bend your wrist forward and backwards as far as you can in each direction.

Elbow – Bend and straighten your elbow as far as it will go in each direction.

Shoulder – Pendulum Exercises- Bend over and use your good arm to support your body with the back of a chair or a table. Let your operated arm hang down and make circles with your hand. Move your torso to create the movement, not your shoulder.

Use your good arm to elevate the arm that was treated. Elevate it no higher than shoulder height.

9. SIGNS & SYMPTOMS: If you have persistent fever greater than 102°, wound redness or drainage; numbness and/or tingling in the affected extremity, or calf pain, please contact our office to speak with your doctor or the covering physician during the off hours. The 24 hour office number to speak with your doctor is 781-279-7040.

10. Special Instructions: _____

MD/RN: _____

Patient: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____