

Evan J. Zahner, MD

Post Operative Instructions:
**Arthroscopic Rotator
Cuff Repair**

1. **Diet:** Begin with liquids, then resume regular diet as you can tolerate.
2. **Activity:** You have had a rotator cuff repair which must be protected to allow healing. Wear your sling at all times except in the shower for the first 4 to 6 weeks. Sleeping with your upper body slightly propped up may be more comfortable for you. You may shower without the wound covered on the third day. Just let your arm dangle at your side in the shower. For your own safety please do not drink alcohol, operate hazardous equipment or make important decisions for 24 hours. Do not attempt to use the shoulder because it will stress the repair. Do not lift anything with that arm.
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:** You will not be able to drive while your arm is in the sling. Ask your doctor when you may begin driving. 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 lifting or over head activity for at least 3 months. You must wear your sling for the first 4 to 6 weeks. If you require a note, please ask your surgeon at the time of your visit.
7. **Follow-up Appointment:** You should have a follow-up appointment scheduled 10-14 days after your surgery. If you have not scheduled this appointment please call our office at 781-279-7040 between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

8. 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.

9. Special Instructions: _____

MD/RN: _____

Patient: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____