

Dr. Rogerson's Post- Op Arthroscopic Rotator Cuff Repair Instructions:

- 1) You may shower the day after your surgery leaving the foam tape dressing in place and removing the immobilizer. Keep the operative arm close to your body and use the non-operative arm to apply soap/shampoo etc. If you have a TENS unit, remove the leads prior to showering. Following your shower, remove the dressing and place band-aids over your incisions. Don't be surprised if you see what looks to be a significant amount of blood, as there is a lot of fluid used during your surgery and this slowly leaks out overnight and is mixed with a little bit of blood that often looks to be a great deal. Massage the incision portals to break up scar tissue formation.
- 2) It is important to use ice packs following your surgery for approximately 1-2 weeks. Do not directly place the ice pack on your skin, but rather cover the skin first with a light weight towel.
- 3) Following your surgery, you may remove the shoulder strap of your immobilizer or remove it completely for short periods of time to flex and extend your elbow several times, as this will help prevent stiffness (**aka elbow flexion and extension exercises**). However, the shoulder immobilizer needs to be kept on when you are up walking around or asleep at night for three weeks post-operatively.
- 4) You are encouraged to move your fingers, wrist and hands as much as possible. Squeeze the ball that comes with the immobilizer several times a day to improve grip strength and avoid numbness and tingling in the hand.
- 5) Post-op day 1 we would like you to start the following exercises:

Codman's circles: Perform this exercise 3 different ways without the immobilizer on. You should **NOT** be actively using the muscles in your operative shoulder while performing these exercises.

- a) Lean forward at the waist and let the operative shoulder and arm hang forward with your elbow straight. With your non-operative side hand gently move your operative side hand or forearm in circular motions both clockwise and counterclockwise slowly making larger and larger circles. Let pain guide the size of your circles.
- b) Perform similar exercise as above except have your operative side elbow bent while you make circles in both directions. Again, have your non-operative side hand move your operative side hand in order to make the circles.
- c) Lean forward at the waist and let both shoulders and arms hang forward with your elbows straight. Bend your knees and sway side to side like an elephant trunk swing. Let your body move your operative shoulder and arm and do **not** actively move it by itself

Spend just a few minutes performing these exercises at one time, but perform them six to seven times a day. Make sure the non-operative arm is doing all the work.

Scapulothoracic strengthening: With the immobilizer off and your arms down by your side, pull your shoulder blades together as if you are trying to make them touch one another. Hold for 10 seconds. Do 10 reps three times a day at least. The more often the better!

- 6) Many of our shoulder arthroscopy patients tell us that they are most comfortable sleeping in a recliner chair or on a couch with a few pillows behind their shoulder for several days after surgery.

- 7) You will be discharged with pain medication. To prevent nausea, take your pain medication with food. Pain medication can make you feel drowsy and even a little light-headed, so be careful when you are up walking and do not drive or use any machinery. Constipation can also happen with narcotic pain medication, so we encourage you to drink a lot of fluids, eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables and take a stool softener. Your pharmacist can help you choose an over the counter brand.
- 8) Your first post-op appointment will be one week after surgery to remove your sutures. Anytime following your surgery if you have questions or concerns, do not hesitate to call Dr. Rogerson's office at (608) 231-3410.