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(1961-2012)

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POST OPERATIVE PATIENT INFORMATION

ARTHROSCOPIC GLENOHUMERAL RECONSTRUCTION (SLAP)

PROCEDURE

Your operation will be done through the arthroscope, a small telescope. Dr. Higgins will make 2 or 3 holes and look inside your shoulder. He will repair the torn tendon.

PAIN

Dr. Higgins has a very particular routine to help make you comfortable (not necessarily pain free) after surgery. This routine includes prescription medicine, over the counter medicine, and ice. You will be given prescriptions for medicine that will help control pain, nausea, inflammation and infection. You will also be asked to take over the counter medication for pain control. Medication should be taken as directed on the calendar that will be given to you at your preoperative visit. The Cold Therapy Unit, alternative system, or ice bags should be worn continuously the first day and through the night for the first few weeks. This will help reduce pain and swelling. It is important to take the ice off and move your shoulder starting the second day after surgery. Please keep a layer of cloth between the ice and your skin, not placing the ice directly on your skin.

BANDAGE

Steristrips, Band-Aids and a bulky soft bandage will be placed on your shoulder. They will soak up any blood or fluid that may seep from the incisions. If there is a lot of drainage on the bandage, you may change it. You may take the bandage (NOT the Band-Aids or Steristrips) off the day after surgery or wait for your physical therapy appointment. The feeling of water in the shoulder is normal. It is left over water from surgery. Some of this water may leak from the incisions and your body will absorb the rest. Band-Aids may be changed as needed after the first three days but never use Neosporin on the incisions.

WOUNDS

The 2 or 3 holes may be sore and some bruising may develop over the first several days following surgery. You may also notice some bruising down the arm. This will go away and no special care is needed. Steristrips will be placed over the incisions and will fall off by themselves.

BATHING

It is safe to bathe 24 hours after surgery. Your skin will have a sticky, orange substance on it from the cleansing solution used in surgery. This can be removed by using rubbing alcohol. To bathe, remove the bulky dressing, but not the Steristrips or Band-Aids. Use your other hand to support the arm under the elbow as needed and wash with regular soap and water. Pat the Band-Aids dry or replace them.

ACTIVITY

Exercises are extremely important following arthroscopic surgery to help you regain motion, strength and flexibility of your shoulder and arm. You may bend and straighten your arm as much as you desire. It is safe to use your operated arm for any movements or activities that are not painful. You can even drive if you are not taking narcotics. Pain should be your guide, do not try and work through it. If an activity is not painful, go ahead and use your arm as naturally as possible. Do not carry anything weighing over 5 pounds with your operative arm. You will begin physical therapy the day after surgery. Please refer to your surgery letter for the appointment date and time. If you have misplaced your letter, please contact our office at 301-232-1050.

RESULTS

Surgery done through the arthroscope is very similar to the surgery done inside your shoulder through a larger incision. Even though the incisions are small, there has been an operation inside and around the shoulder joint. Complete healing may take several weeks or months.

PRECAUTIONS

If you have a fever of 101 degrees, severe pain or redness in your shoulder please contact the office at 301-232-1050. If after hours, please call 240-401-0019. Swelling, some drainage and redness are normal.

FOLLOW UP

Your appointment to see Dr. Higgins or Kristine James has been made for about 1 week after your surgery. Please refer to your surgery letter for the date and time of your appointment. If you have misplaced your letter, please contact our office at 301-232-1050.