

Post-operative Instructions for Shoulder Arthroscopy Patients

The operation was performed through several small incisions. You may experience some swelling and bruising in the shoulder area. This is usually due to fluid used during the surgery for visualization or some minor bleeding from the operation. This fluid is usually reabsorbed by your body over time. The swelling may travel down the arm with gravity.

Dressing: If a plastic dressing is used, this can be kept on until the first post-operative visit. You can get the plastic dressing wet as long as the dressing continues to seal the wound. If there is seepage through the dressing, please use gauze to change the dressing and keep dry until your visit. Your stitches will be removed at your first visit after surgery. Please do not bathe or swim for the first 4 weeks.

Ice Machine: If you have chosen to use an ice machine, it should be used for the first week. Please follow the directions given to you by the representative. The ice machine company will make arrangements for you to return the machine. If you do not have an ice machine, you may use ice packs to control the pain and swelling. Do not put the ice directly on the skin. Use ice for 20 minutes at a time, three times a day.

Activity: Your operated shoulder will be in a sling. You should remain in the sling until your first post-operative visit. Dr. Capeci will tell you how many weeks you will be in the sling, depending on the type of surgery that was performed. You should come out of the sling daily to move your elbow, wrist, and fingers. The shoulder can be moved slightly forward (not off to the side) to come in and out of the sling. Physical therapy will be discussed at your first follow-up visit after surgery.

Medications: You will be given a prescription for pain medication. Please take the pain medication with food. Do not drink alcoholic beverages or drive if you are using pain medications. Pain medications may cause nausea and constipation.

Work: You will discuss when you can return to work with your surgeon on your first post-operative visit.

Driving: You will discuss when you can drive with your surgeon on your first post-operative visit.

Follow-up: Your follow-up visit will be approximately 7 days after surgery. Please call the office to confirm your follow-up appointment.

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