

Shoulder Surgery (Arthroscopic or Open)



Care of the Surgical Site

Arthroscopic procedure:

- Change the bandage 48 hours after surgery and continue to change every 2 days. Use band-aids to keep the small incisions covered until your follow-up appointment.
- Wash only with a cloth after surgery. Your surgeon or therapist will give you instructions on when it is safe to shower.
- Do not soak in a bath or use a hot tub or swimming pool until your surgeon or therapist says it is safe to do so.

Open procedure:

- You may see drainage that is clear, yellow or has a red colour on your dressing.
- Change the bandage 48 hours after you leave the hospital and continue to change every 2 days. If dressings are very wet, change them daily.
- Use Tegaderm Island dressings. You can find these at your local pharmacy.
- Wash only with a cloth after surgery. Your surgeon or therapist will give you instructions on when it is safe to shower.
- Do not soak in a bath or use a hot tub or swimming pool until your surgeon or therapist says it is safe to do so.
- Staples or stitches will be removed at your follow up appointment in about two weeks.

Activity

- Wear your sling at all times except when doing your exercises, washing or getting dressed (as instructed by your therapist).
- **Do Not** until told otherwise by your surgeon or therapist:
 - Lift or carry anything with the arm that's been operated on
 - Push or pull anything, including opening and closing doors
 - Actively lift your arm away from your body

Pain Management

- Take your pain pills 30 minutes before you exercise and use a covered icepack for 20 minutes after exercising.
- Take your pain pills before coming for therapy or clinic visits and **bring** extra with you.
- Prescriptions for pain pills cannot be renewed after 3:00 pm. If you think you will run out of pain medications, please contact your surgeon's office between 8:00 am and 3:00 pm. You may also contact your family physician for renewals.

Follow up

- Keep your follow up appointment with your surgeon. If you do not receive an appointment or need to change it, please call the surgeon's office to make other arrangements.
- If you have concerns about your care, please **contact your surgeon's office between 8:00 am to 3:00 pm**. Please leave a message if the phone is not answered immediately as the administrative assistant may be occupied and will return your call promptly.
- **For after-hours urgent assistance**, please go to your local emergency room or urgent care centre.

Physiotherapy:

- After your surgery, you may be seen by a Physiotherapist before you are discharged from the hospital. The Physiotherapist will review what exercises you ARE allowed to do, and what movement restrictions you are NOT allowed to do following surgery. It would be best if your driver could be present during this review. You will be given a sheet of exercises with YOUR SPECIFIC RESTRICTIONS on it. PLEASE FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS. The Physiotherapist also will adjust your sling as needed, and teach you how to wear the sling. You will also be given a copy of your post-operative physiotherapy orders that the surgeon completes. You can discuss your choice of a follow up physiotherapy clinic with the Physiotherapist. Ensure you bring the Physiotherapy referral form to your first visit.
- If you return to Surgical Daycare later in the day, physiotherapy will not be available to assess you. In this case, the nurse in surgical daycare will provide you with a copy of your post-operative physiotherapy orders/referral sheet completed by the surgeon. This sheet is very important and has detailed instructions for restrictions/allowed exercises. Please arrange an outpatient physiotherapy appointment as soon as possible after you leave the hospital. Your Physiotherapist can help make sling adjustments and provide you with exercise instructions that are allowed exercises after your surgery.
- If you are from **out of town**, you will need to arrange physiotherapy closer to your home. Typically what you are shown in the hospital after surgery (home exercises) will allow you to begin your outpatient therapy in about 2 weeks (unless otherwise told by your therapist, you might begin sooner/later, depending on the type of surgery you have). We suggest that you have a plan with a clinic before your surgery so that you can start therapy as soon as needed.
- If you choose to come to **St. Joseph's Outpatient Physiotherapy** department it is located in the Monsignor Roney Building 3rd floor, 519-646-6001.