Discharge Instructions for Arthroscopic Shoulder Instability Surgery

Wound Care:

- Keep dressing on for 3-5 days. After removing the dressing, keep wounds covered with fresh band aids.
- OK to get wet in shower after 3-5 days. Do not scrub over the incisions - use soap on your neck and let the soapy water run over your shoulder. Pat dry with a clean towel.
- Apply band aids to portal sites after shower.
- Do not submerge in water until sutures are removed at 2 weeks.
- Sutures will be removed during your first post-operative appointment (10-14 days after surgery)

Activity:

- **Sling on at all times for 6 weeks**. This will help protect the repair and decrease chance of re injury.
- **No physical therapy** until 2-4 weeks post-op determined on a case by case basis
- No use of operative shoulder at all. No lifting, pushing, pulling.
- ***No driving*** for 3-4 months.
- At night, place a pillow behind your elbow to prevent your shoulder from bending backward. Sleeping with extra pillows (almost in an upright position) will help keep down the swelling and may be more comfortable for you. Sleeping in a recliner is often more comfortable for the first few weeks post-op.
- ***Physical Therapy -***. If you have a preferred therapy location you would like to go to, please let the office know so we can send the referral there. We work with a network of trusted therapist and will send the referral to one if you don't have a preference

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Medications:

- Please continue all medications that you were taking prior to your surgery in additions to the medications prescribed for post-operative pain. If you have questions regarding those medications that you were on prior to surgery, please contact your primary care physician.
- Take pain medications as directed.
- If you feel the narcotic pain medication is too strong, you may use ibuprofen or acetaminophen instead.

Ice & Cold Therapy:

- One important goal following surgery is to minimize swelling and pain. The best way to achieve this is with the frequent application of ice.
- For the first few days after surgery the ice therapy is placed over your dressing, later it can be placed over a thin towel. Please check your skin regularly and discontinue the ice machine immediately if there is any sign of skin injury.
- Use the ice therapy for 20 minutes every 1 hour for the first week, then use it after physical therapy or times of increased activity for the next several weeks.

Diet:

- Resume a normal diet.
- If your stomach is upset, try bland, low-fat foods like plain rice, broiled chicken, toast, and yogurt.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Often the pain medication causes constipation, if this occurs you may try an over the counter laxative / stool softener (such as Colace or Senokot) or take a fiber supplement every day.

Follow-up Appointments:

- Your first post-operative appointment will in 10-14 days for suture removal.
- If you do not have this appointment set up, please call the appointment line

When to call for help:

Call 911 anytime you think you may need emergency care. For example, call if:
You pass out (lose consciousness).
You have severe trouble breathing.
You have sudden chest pain and shortness of breath, or you cough up blood.
You have severe nausea or vomiting.

Call the office if:
You have pain that does not go away after you take pain pills.
You have a fever over 100.4°F.
You have loose stitches, or your incision comes open.
Your incision keeps bleeding 3 days after your surgery.
You have signs of infection, such as redness around incision or pus draining from your incision.