



Rotator Cuff Repair

Post-operative Instructions

- Diet:** Advance with solid foods as tolerated
- Bandages:** After 72 hours you may remove your dressings and place small band-aids to cover incisions sites. You may change the band-aids as necessary. Do not clean your incisions with peroxide, alcohol or ointments. Do not scrub or soak your incisions in water.
- Bathing/shower:** You should keep your surgical site dry until your stitches are removed at your first post-operative visit. If you do shower please cover your incisions with a waterproof bandage or plastic.
- Activity:** Upon waking up from anesthesia you will be in a sling and abduction pillow that keeps your arm slightly off your side. The purpose of the pillow is to reduce tension on your repaired rotator cuff. Please stay in your sling and pillow until you are seen in the office. You will be in the sling and pillow for 6 weeks following surgery. You may remove the sling/pillow for bathing and physical therapy. You may move your hand and wrist as tolerated. Please remember that you **SHOULD NOT ACTIVELY MOVE YOUR SHOULDER** as you can jeopardize the repair.
- Medications:** You will have a nerve block prior to surgery unless contraindicated. This will help you with post-operative pain relief. This block provides significant pain relief in the early post-operative period, but will wear off 12-16 hours after surgery. You will be prescribed a narcotic pain medication to help with pain control you may experience after the block wears off. It is very important to “stay ahead” of the pain by taking the medication prior to the onset of severe pain. Once you begin to regain sensation in the fingers or the arm it is advisable to take your pain medicine. **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL YOU HAVE SEVERE PAIN TO TAKE THE PAIN MEDICINE.** Pain medicine can cause nausea and constipation. Please take this medicine with food. You may be prescribed a medication to prevent nausea. You may need to take a stool softener or laxative to prevent constipation.

Comfort measures: A cooling system will be given to you at the time of surgery. Keeping the shoulder cool will help reduce pain and swelling. Apply ice or the cooling cuff to the shoulder for 20 minutes 4 times a day.

Problems: Your shoulder may have swelling, soreness and bruising for the first week. This is to be expected.

Please contact Coastal Orthopedics if you have any of the following

1. Severe pain
2. A temperature above 101 degrees
3. Pain, redness or significant swelling in your shoulder/arm

Appointment: You will need to make a follow up appointment for 7-10 days after surgery. Physical therapy will be prescribed after your first post-operative visit.

Please call with any questions 978-927-3040