

Dr. Michael B. Ellman

**POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS
ROTATOR CUFF REPAIR**

DIET

- Start with clear liquids and light foods (jellos, soups, etc.), and gradually progress to your normal diet.

WOUND CARE

- Maintain your operative dressing, loosen bandage if swelling of the elbow, wrist, or hand occurs.
- It is normal for the shoulder to bleed and swell following surgery – if blood soaks onto the bandage– reinforce with additional dressing.
- Remove surgical dressing on the *third* post-operative day. Apply waterproof band-aids over incisions.
- To avoid infection, keep surgical incisions clean and *dry* – you may shower without the sling – NO immersion of operative arm (i.e. bath).
- Avoid smoking – this increases your risk of infection.

MEDICATIONS

- Common side effects of pain medication are nausea, drowsiness, and constipation. If constipation occurs, consider taking an over-the-counter laxative.
- Do not drive a car or operate machinery while taking narcotic medication.

ACTIVITY/EXERCISE

- While sleeping or resting, inclined positions and a pillow under the forearm may provide better comfort.
- **DO NOT** lift or perform any repetitive above shoulder level activities in the first 7-10 days following surgery.
- Avoid sitting for long periods (without arm supported) or long distance traveling for 1 week.
- **NO** driving until instructed otherwise by physician.
- May return to sedentary work **ONLY** or school 3-4 days after surgery, if pain is tolerable.
- You may begin elbow, wrist and hand range of motion on the first post-operative day. **NO** shoulder motion.
- Formal physical therapy will begin 3-4 weeks following your surgery.
- Driving is not permitted until you have weaned out of the sling.

IMMOBILIZER

- Your sling with supporting abduction pillow should be worn at all times (except for hygiene). Expect to remain in the sling at all times for 3-4 weeks following surgery.

ICE THERAPY

- Begin immediately after surgery.
- Use icing machine continuously or ice packs (if machine not prescribed) every 2-3 hours for 15-20 minutes daily until your first post-operative visit.

****EMERGENCIES****

Contact Dr. Ellman or his assistant at 303-233-1223 if any of the following are present:

- Unrelenting pain
- Fever over 101° (it is normal to have a low grade fever for the first day or two following surgery) or chills
- Excessive redness around incisions
- Color change in wrist or hand
- Continuous drainage or bleeding from incision (a small amount of drainage is expected)
- Difficulty breathing
- Excessive nausea/vomiting



PANORAMA

Orthopedics & Spine Center

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****If you have an emergency after office hours or on the weekend, contact (303)233-1223 and the Physician's Assistant on call will respond.**

****If a need requires immediate attention, proceed to the nearest emergency room.**