

**Dr. Michael B. Ellman**

**POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS  
TOTAL SHOULDER ARTHROPLASTY**

**DIET**

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

**WOUND CARE**

- Do NOT remove clear adhesive dressing. This is waterproof and a barrier to infection. This will remain on your incision for approximately 3 weeks or as otherwise directed. You may allow water to run over the clear adhesive dressing.
- To avoid infection, keep surgical incisions clean and **dry** – you may shower without the sling starting 3 days after surgery – 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

\*\*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.



**PANORAMA**

**Orthopedics & Spine Center**

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