



Post-operative Rotator Cuff Repair

After Surgery:

- Please do not stop and eat a large meal on your way home, it may cause nausea and vomiting. Please start on something like ginger ale or Sprite and crackers.
- Report the following: Excessive bleeding, swelling, drainage, green or yellow drainage, redness around your incisions, a temperature of 101 or higher, difficulty breathing, or excessive nausea/vomiting.
- If you have any of these concerns, or other questions, please call. During the daytime the office phone number is (940)937-3636. After hours, you may call the ED at (940) 937-9213.

Dressing care:

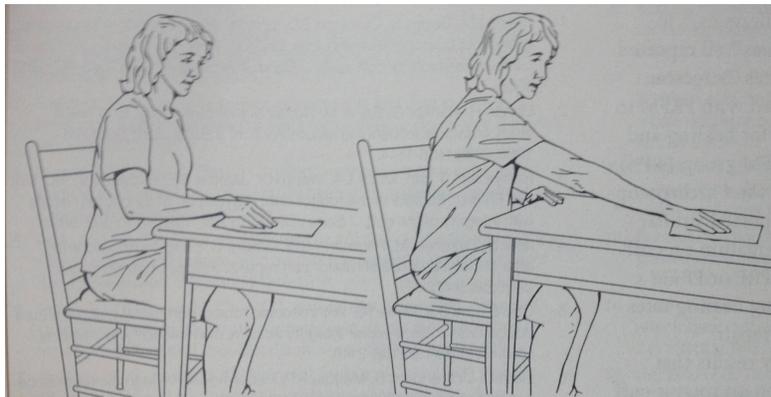
- You can remove your bandages in 3 days and then it is okay to shower as long as your wounds are dry. Please do not soak incisions in water. No standing water such as bath water, lake water, or swimming pools/hot tubs.
 - For the first 3 days, you can shower but place a large trash bag over your shoulder and sling to keep your operative arm dry.
- It is normal for some drainage/bleeding to soak through your bandages during the first few days. Simply reinforce your dressings with additional gauze and tape.

Medications:

- Please call your physician or pharmacist for any questions about your medications or if for any reason you are unable to take prescribed medications.
- Take all medications as exactly as prescribed.
- DO NOT drink alcohol; operate automobile or other heavy machinery while on narcotic pain relievers.
- Narcotic pain relievers are constipating. I recommend regular use of over-the-counter stool softeners such as Surfak or Colace on a daily basis while on pain medication to help reduce this side effect. Please insure you have adequate fluid intake and use a laxative as needed for constipation.
- Over the counter medications such as Ibuprofen or Advil can be taken as well to help avoid some of the fluctuating pain and help reduce overall narcotic requirements. 200-400mg doses of these over the counter medications taken between your pain pills can help. They can cause heartburn. Take these with food or milk, and over the counter indigestion pills can be taken to help with this also.

Activities:

- Use ice packs for 20 minutes every 1-2 hours daily until your first appointment.
- Keep your upper body elevated as much as possible. No strenuous activities until cleared by the physician.
- Keep your sling on at all times, but come out of it for hygiene and several (at least 3) times per day to work on motion of your elbow, wrist, and hand. Some putty, an old tennis ball, or even a dish cloth that you squeeze repetitively will help maintain strength in your hand.
 - If you feel like your shoulder is stiff and need to move it, it has to be passive motion. This means you can move your shoulder, but *do not* use the muscles around your shoulder to do this. Use something else, like your other hand, or place your hand on a table, and use your fingers or other hand to move it away from your body. An easy way that you can do this is to lay down on a bed, and while letting your operative shoulder and arm remain relaxed, you use the other hand to raise the operative arm up in front of you.
 - Start pendulum swings 3-4 times daily. To do this, stand near a table or chair, lean forward, and let the hand of your operative shoulder hang towards the ground. You then gently swing your hand around (in circles, forward and back, side to side, etc.).
 - The following exercise can be performed on a table as soon as comfortable.



- Many find it more comfortable to sleep in a recliner or propped up on several pillows, with added pillows under the elbow/forearm for the first few weeks after surgery.