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DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS AFTER TOTAL SHOULDER

INCISIONAL CARE:

- Dressings are to be kept clean and dry. A small amount of clear drainage or bleeding may take place. The dressing should be changed daily as instructed by the nursing staff.
- Some swelling around the incision is normal. You will find it more comfortable to wear loose clothing to avoid pressure on the incision.
- You may shower in 3 days.
- Never, ever remove your own stitches or trim what may appear to be excess suture material. We will remove your stitches in the office at your post-op appointment. If you are concerned about your stitches or if they are bothering you, please call us.

ICE THERAPY

- Apply ice to your shoulder to help decrease pain and swelling. You should use your Iceman machine as much as possible. A good rule of thumb is to use it whenever you are at rest. This should continue for the first 3-4 weeks after surgery.

ACTIVITY:

- The arm should be kept in the shoulder sling and swathe until you are seen in the office.
- You may want to place a pillow behind your elbow when seated or lying down to keep the surgery area forward to help decrease pain.
- Don't use the arm to push yourself up in bed or from a chair because this requires forceful contraction of muscles. Use the opposite arm.
- Don't lift anything heavier than a glass of water for the first 6 weeks after surgery.
- Do follow the program of home exercises prescribed for you by your physical therapist. You may need to do the exercises 4 to 5 times a day.
- Remember that you will probably tire more easily than usual. You may want to plan a rest period of 30 to 60 minutes mid-morning and midafternoon.
- Don't overdo it! If your shoulder pain was severe before the surgery, the experience of pain-free motion may lull you into thinking that you can do more than is prescribed. Early overuse of the shoulder may result in severe limitations in motion.

MEDICATIONS:

- Strong oral pain medication has been given to you upon discharge. Please attempt to use these sparingly, using aspirin, Tylenol or ibuprofen products to supplement the prescribed pain medication. If additional pain medication is needed, please call the office during regular business hours, Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

- Constipation is a common problem for patients following surgery. This is usually due to your limited activity and any pain medications you may be taking. Discuss your diet with your doctor. It should include fresh fruits and vegetables as well as eight full glasses of liquid each day, unless your doctor tells you otherwise.
- Please make certain that an appointment has been scheduled for you at the clinic for approximately 2 weeks after surgery.

CALL YOUR DOCTOR'S OFFICE if you notice any unusual side effects such as a prolonged fever, increased pain, or foul smelling discharge from the incision.

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