



Post-Operative Instructions after Total Shoulder Replacement

You should already have an appointment for your first post-op visit and suture removal (if needed) in our office within 2 weeks of surgery. If not, be sure to call and schedule one.

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- Your surgical dressing is waterproof and can be left in place for 7 days after you have been discharged. You will be given another dressing at discharge and should replace your current dressing with that one 7 days after discharge. If you notice any staining on your dressing, it needs to be changed sooner. It is very important to keep your incision site clean and dry at all times, **DO NOT** apply any ointments to your incision.
- You are able to shower. Cover your dressing with saran wrap while showering to ensure the incision and dressing stay dry. Do not get incision directly wet until we see you in our office for your first post-op visit. Absolutely no tub soaking or swimming.
- Despite great care, any incision can become infected. Contact the office immediately if you develop fever, chills, redness to the incision site, or drainage from the incision site.
- You are required to be immobilized in your sling for 2-3 weeks after surgery. You may remove your sling while at rest in a chair, but it is recommended that you are wearing it at all other times. You also may come out of your sling to do range of motion (movement) of your hand, wrist, and elbow, as well as shoulder pendulums. **NO OTHER ACTIVITY OR RANGE OF MOTION TO YOUR SHOULDER. DO NOT PUSH OFF WITH YOUR SURGICAL SHOUDLER.**
- Sleep upright in bed with extra pillows or a reclining chair with a firm pillow under your elbow for maximum comfort, lying down flat is usually more painful.
- Ice can be used on a daily basis. Ice shoulder in 20-minute intervals on/off as needed for swelling and pain control. Once physical therapy starts, be sure to ice afterwards. Do not apply ice directly to the wound. Make sure to wrap in a towel or wash cloth to prevent moisture to the incision.
- You were given a prescription for pain medication following your surgery. Please take this medication as prescribed. Some patients may not be experiencing pain initially after surgery due to anesthesia or potential nerve blocks that were administered but we still do recommend patients take pain medications during this time to stay ahead of any potential pain as their anesthesia and/or nerve block wears off.

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