



Shoulder and Elbow Service

Robert J. Gillespie, MD

www.clevelandshoulderelbow.com

Discharge Instructions after Open Rotator Cuff Repair

- A sling has been provided for you. Remove the sling 5 times each day to perform motion exercises. After the first 48 to 72 hours, discontinue using the sling. You should use the sling as a protective device, if you are in a crowd.
- Use ice on the shoulder intermittently over the first 48 hours after surgery.
- Pain medication has been prescribed for you.
- Use your medication liberally over the first 48 hours, and then begin to taper your use. You may take Extra Strength Tylenol or Tylenol only in place of the pain pills. **DO NOT** take ANY nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory pain medications: Advil, Motrin, Ibuprofen, Aleve, Naproxen, or Naprosyn.
- You may remove your dressing after two days.
- You may shower 4 days after surgery. The incision CANNOT get wet prior to 4 days. Simply allow the water to wash over the site and then pat dry. Do not rub the incision. Make sure your axilla (armpit) is completely dry after showering.
- Take one aspirin (81 mg) a day for 2 weeks after surgery, unless you have an aspirin sensitivity/allergy or asthma.
- Active reaching and lifting are not permitted. You may use the operative arm for activities of daily living that do not require the operative arm to leave the side of the body, such as eating, drinking, bathing, etc.
- Three to 5 times each day you should perform assisted overhead reaching and external rotation (outward turning) exercises with the operative arm. You were taught these exercises prior to discharge. Both exercises should be done with the non-operative arm used as the "therapist arm" while the operative arm remains relaxed. Ten of each exercise should be done three to five times each day.

Overhead reach is helping to lift your stiff arm up as high as it will go. To stretch your overhead reach, lie flat on your back, relax, and grasp the wrist of the tight shoulder with your opposite hand. Using the power in your opposite arm, bring the stiff arm up as far as it is comfortable. Start holding it for ten seconds and then work up to where you can hold it for a count of 30. Breathe slowly and deeply while the arm is moved. Repeat this stretch ten times, trying to help the arm up a little higher each time.

External rotation is turning the arm out to the side while your elbow stays close to your body. External rotation is best stretched while you are lying on your back. Hold a cane, yardstick, broom handle, or dowel in both hands. Bend both elbows to a right angle. Use steady, gentle force from your normal arm to rotate the hand of the stiff

shoulder out away from your body. Continue the rotation as far as it will go comfortably, holding it there for a count of 10. Repeat this exercise ten times.

Please call 216-844-0209 for any problems. Including the following:

- excessive redness of the Incisions
- drainage for more than 4 days
- fever of more than 101.5 F

Please call 216-844-0209 to make a follow-up appointment if one has not already been made. You should see the doctor 10-14 days after your surgery.

Ahuja Office
3999 Richmond
Road
Beachwood, OH
44122

Mayfield Village
730 SOM Center
Road
Mayfield Village,
OH 44143

Westlake Office
960 Clague Road
Westlake, OH
44145

UH Cleveland
Medical Center
11100 Euclid
Avenue
Cleveland, OH
44106