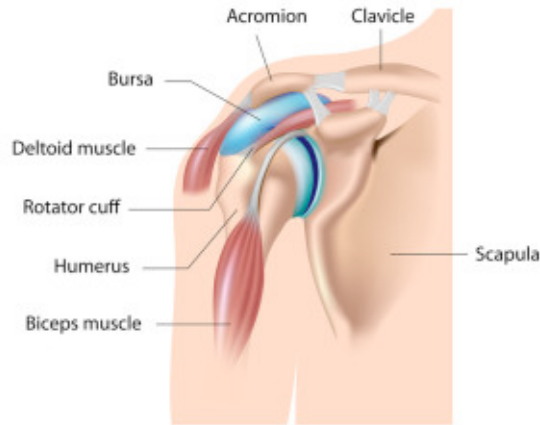


Post-Operative Care for Shoulder Arthroscopy

Dr. Zachary P. Arntson



DIET

When you get home take it easy. Find a comfortable chair, couch or bed, and relax. You may find it easier to sleep in an inclined chair, recliner, or sofa. Put a pillow or cushion under your elbow to prevent it from going backwards. Get up to go to the bathroom or just briefly to get something to eat. Eat lightly at first and advance your diet as tolerated. If you feel nauseated, it could be from some of the medicines received at the hospital or from your pain medication prescription. If nausea is encountered, drink only clear liquids (i.e. Sprite or 7-up). The only solids should be dry crackers or toast. If nausea and vomiting occur, fill the prescription for Zofran or Phenergan that Dr. Arntson has given you and use as directed. A low-grade fever (100.5) is not uncommon in the first 24-48 hours after surgery.

WOUND CARE

There will be a dressing on your shoulder. If you notice some blood staining the night of the surgery or that next day, do not be alarmed. If you see blood actually dripping, please call my office for instructions. The surgery consists of using a lot of fluid irrigation to see inside shoulder and most of it is removed when done, however, if any fluid is left over it can commonly ooze out and this is normal!

You may remove the dressing 72 hours after surgery. At that time, you may get into a shower and get the shoulder wet. **Do not** immerse the shoulder in a bath, pool, Jacuzzi or lake water. **Do not** do anything to the wounds themselves. **Do not** put any ointments, creams etc. on them. Simply allow water to hit the shoulder. Soap the rest of your body, pat the shoulder dry with a clean towel, and put band-aids over the incisions (if steri-strips are not already over the incisions). If your incisions are dry, then it is OK to keep them open to air without a dressing on. Let the steri-strips fall off on their own. If the incisions ooze a little (this is normal) then use some gauze pads from the drugstore and change the dressing daily until it is dry. Hold it on with the bandage tape.

PAIN MEDICATION

You have been given a prescription for pain medication. Take it as directed. If you only have mild pain, you may try taking Tylenol or Advil to avoid some of the side effects of prescription pain medicines such as nausea, constipation, or drowsiness. Be aware that pain medicines are only supposed to last about 3-4 hours. Don't be alarmed if after a few hours you need to take some more. Taking pain medication before bedtime will assist in sleeping. Do not drive if you have taken any prescription pain medication!!! Pain medication can lead to constipation. High fiber diet, lots of fluids, and a stool softener (i.e. Colace) may be prescribed to you by Dr. Arntson will help prevent this occurrence. You should resume your normal medications for other conditions the day after surgery.

During the first week after surgery, it is often helpful to use cold on your shoulder. Ice cubes, re-usable cold packs or a bag of frozen vegetables all work well. Place them over something like a washcloth or pillow case, leave on for 15-20 minutes then off for an hour. You can repeat this as often as needed. Do not put anything frozen directly on your skin. You may get FROSTBITE!

BLOOD CLOT PREVENTION

You should take an aspirin (325mg) daily for two weeks after surgery. This will lower the risk of a blood clot developing after surgery. Should severe

calf pain or significant swelling of the calf and ankle occur. Please call Dr. Arntson's office at 763-441-0298.

ACTIVITY

Keep your shoulder immobilizer/sling on at all times. It is ok to remove to take a shower after 72 hours from surgery. It is ok to straighten your elbow and let your arm hang toward the floor and wash under your arm with your opposite side hand. You can do the same for putting on deodorant or putting on a shirt. Afterwards put the immobilizer back on. You are instructed to sleep with the immobilizer on. This will likely be up to six weeks after surgery. Do not use your operative shoulder to push or pull anything or support yourself. It is important to come out of the sling and fully bend and straighten your elbow and wrist 20 times a day, however, not actively move your shoulder

You will have significant one-arm work and driving instructions. You may be able to return a one-arm desk type work duties if available in as early as 1-2 weeks. It will be longer if your job is strenuous or requires repetitive or overhead use of your arm. It may take as long as 12 weeks to regain your function of your shoulder and likely 4-6 months for heavy physical work.

You will prescribed physical therapy and this will be started and tailored depending on your specific shoulder condition.

CONCERNS

Although shoulder arthroscopy is pretty safe, problems do occasionally arise. If you develop any of the following signs or symptoms, please call my office (763-441-0298). Go directly to Mercy/Unity Hospital Emergency Center if the symptoms are particular severe!

- Temperature greater than 102 degrees F measured by thermometer, along with redness around the incisions and increasing pain around the shoulder that does not respond to pain medication.
- Swelling in your lower leg and calf muscles with tenderness when you gently squeeze the calf
- Shortness of breath and pain on deep breathing