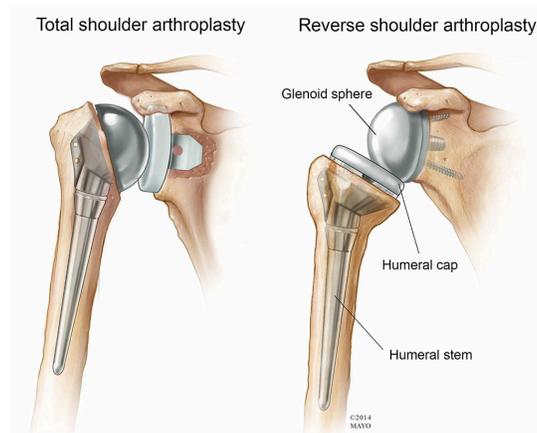


Post-Operative Care for Total or Reverse Shoulder Arthroplasty

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WOUND CARE

Most patient's incisions will have buried dissolvable stitches along with skin glue over the top. This dressing is waterproof. It is ok to shower with the skin glue on. Pat the shoulder dry when done. Do not submerge the bandage in bath, hot tub, pool, etc. This glue dressing will eventually peel off in 2-3 weeks. Generally you can submerge the incision after 3-4 weeks. It is not unusual for these incisions to drain for a day or two after surgery. If there is excessive drainage to the edges of the bandage or leaking from the bandage after clinic hours or weekends, obtain gauze bandages from the local drugstore and apply tape to hold the gauze pads. Change the gauze pads daily. If you experience any increased redness, drainage, wound dehiscence/openings please call the 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.

Physical therapy will be ordered and is essential to regain your range of motion and function of your shoulder. This will be scheduled at an outpatient PT clinic and started within the first week after surgery.

Be as active as your shoulder lets you. But avoid setting too ambitious a schedule for yourself in the days and week after surgery. You may feel very tired and out of energy for the first weeks or so. This is normal and will pass.

It is important to put ice, reusable cold packs or bags of frozen vegetables over the front of the shoulder. Keep ice on for at least 20 minutes on then 20 minutes off. Repeat this as necessary. Never put ice directly on the skin!!! This may cause frostbite!

PAIN MEDICATION

You will be prescribed several different pain medications based upon your individual needs and potential drug allergies. You are to take these as directed and follow the prescription instructions closely. In the first day or so after surgery, take the pain medicine regularly. Don't wait until the pain is real bad; it is more difficult to control. If you take it and feel some relief for a few hours and then begin to have more pain, take some more. Don't be alarmed if after a few hours you need to take some more. It is not uncommon to experience more pain as the swelling within the shoulder increases. 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 that will help prevent this occurrence. You should resume your normal medications for other conditions the day after surgery.

DIET

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 continue, fill the prescription for Zofran or Phenergan that has been given to you and use as directed. A low-grade fever (100.5) is not uncommon in the first 24-48 hours after surgery.

BLOOD CLOT PREVENTION

To prevent blood clots from developing every patient is prescribed a blood thinning medication for six weeks after surgery. Based on standard risk, most patients will be prescribed Aspirin 325mg tablets to take twice a day. If increased risk of blood clots, patients will be prescribed a different blood thinner. This will be determined before surgery.

CONCERNS

Although shoulder replacement is 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 particularly severe!

- Temperature greater than 102 degrees F measured by thermometer, along with redness around the incisions and increasing pain around the knee 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

REMINDER

- Every patient who has had a total shoulder replacement needs to take prophylactic antibiotics before any dental, urologic, endoscopy or colonoscopy procedures **for the remainder of their lives**. Please call Dr. Arntson's office ahead of time to receive a prescription. Instructions below.

- *Not allergic to penicillin: take cephalexin or amoxicillin 2 grams by mouth one hour prior to procedure*
- *Yes allergic to penicillin: take clindamycin 600 mg by mouth one hour prior to procedure*