

## **Post-Operative Instructions: Shoulder Arthroscopy with Rotator Cuff Repair / Biceps Tenodesis**

### **Coming Home**

- It is normal to feel like your shoulder is stiff and swollen with fluid. This may take a week or longer to resolve.
- Wear your shoulder sling and pillow. While using the sling, it is important to loosen the sling and move your elbow for a few minutes, several times a day, to avoid elbow stiffness.
- You may have been given an ice wrap machine. Keep a cloth layer between the wrap and your skin at all times. The machine will need to be refilled with ice every 4-6 hours. Remove the wrap for 15 minutes every 1-2 hours to inspect the skin and ensure that cold burns are not occurring.

### **Dressings/Hygiene**

- Keep your dressings dry and intact until 5 days after surgery, at which point they can be removed.
- At this point, most incisions will typically be dry and further dressings will not be required.
- You may shower once the initial dressings are removed. Until then, please perform sponge baths in order to avoid getting the dressings wet.
- If there is still some drainage from the surgical wounds, reapply sterile gauze squares and tape in place. Change daily until the wounds are dry.
- Once the dressings have been removed and the wounds are dry, it is safe to leave the wounds open to air. You may apply band-aids over the wounds for additional protection if you prefer.

### **Medications**

- **Acetaminophen (Tylenol):** This medication helps with pain. It should be taken on a scheduled basis (1000 mg every 8 hours) for as long as needed.
- **Oxycodone / Tramadol / Hydrocodone:** These are narcotic medications that can be taken as needed for pain control. You should taper off and discontinue these medications as soon as you feel you no longer need them.
- **Gabapentin:** This medication helps diminish pain signals along the sensory nerves. If prescribed, it should be taken as prescribed on a scheduled basis at least until you are off narcotic pain medication. You may keep taking the gabapentin for as long as it is beneficial.
- **Ibuprofen:** You may have been prescribed a short course of this anti-inflammatory medication. After completing this, you should **avoid** the further use of any anti-inflammatory (NSAID) medication after surgery, because this can hinder tissue healing. Examples include ibuprofen, naproxen, Motrin, Advil, Aleve, diclofenac, Voltaren, celecoxib, Celebrex, meloxicam, and Mobic.
- **Aspirin / Enoxaparin (Lovenox) / Apixaban (Eliquis):** You may have been prescribed one of these medications to help lower the risk of blood clots. If prescribed, it is important to take the full amount of medication. The over-the-counter aspirin dose is 325 mg daily for 30 days.

### **Follow-up and Contacts**

- Your first post-operative visit has likely already been scheduled, typically in about 2 weeks.
- Physical therapy is usually begun 1-2 weeks after surgery.
- If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call:

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