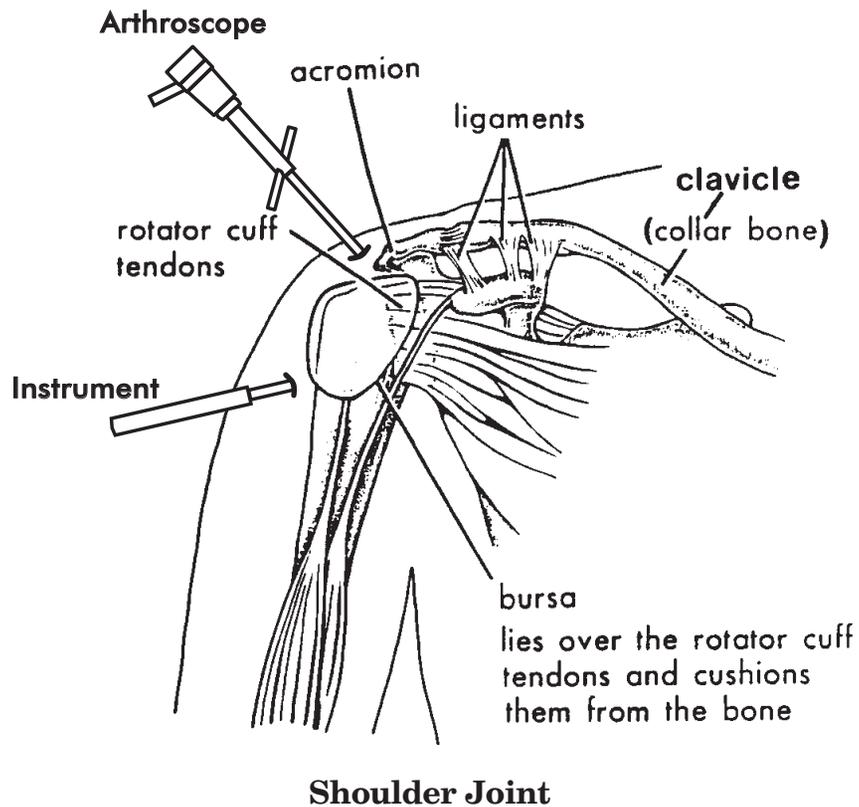


After Shoulder Arthroscopic Surgery

Discharge Instructions

Includes:

- Examination of joint
- Debridement of joint
- Removal of loose bodies



General Information

The procedure is done to examine the joint and do minor surgeries (i.e. cleaning joint surfaces, removing pieces of bone, tissue, screws/staples from previous surgeries).

Important Points in Treatment

Bleeding

- There may be some drainage/blood on the bandage. This is usually not a cause for concern.
- If the dressing becomes soaked with blood, put firm steady pressure over the area for 10–15 minutes or until the bleeding stops.

Pain & Swelling

- Your shoulder will be swollen and somewhat uncomfortable for 24–48 hours after your operation. This is normal and partly due to the fact that some fluid is put into the shoulder during the procedure.
- Apply covered ice packs over the shoulder for 10–20 minutes every 2–3 hours as needed to lessen swelling and pain. (**Do not put ice in direct contact with the skin.**) A plastic bag with ice cubes or a bag of frozen peas placed in a pillow-case or towel, works well. (Do not eat the peas after using as an ice pack).
- If you have swelling in your arm or hand, we recommend you to raise the arm on pillows. Open and close your hand repeatedly 10 times, 3 times a day until the swelling goes away. This is best done when lying down.

Bathing

- If bleeding comes through the dressing, it should be changed. You can buy bandages at your local pharmacy.
- The dressing may be removed _____ days after surgery. If there are no specific instructions, you may remove the dressing in 2–3 days. After removing the dressing, if there is still any drainage from the incisions, replace with a new bandage.
- Sponge bath for the first 5 days after surgery, making sure to keep the surgery area dry. You may then start to shower if the incision is dry and healing well.
- Do not remove the steri-strips (tapes) that are over the incisions. If they fall off, replace with band-aids until your follow-up appointment.
- If you have a sling, you may remove it when your arm is comfortable without it.

Medication

- You may be given a prescription for pain medication. This medication works best when taken regularly rather than only when in severe pain.
- Some of these medications can cause drowsiness and constipation. To prevent constipation, eat a high fibre diet. For example; full grain breads, bran cereals (All Bran, Bran Buds, Fruit & Fiber), fruits (prunes, raisins, dates), and vegetables.
- Ask your pharmacist about a mild laxative or stool softener such as “Colace”, if needed.
- **Do not drink alcohol when taking pain medication.**

Activity

- Recovery after surgery takes time. It is normal to feel weak and to tire easily during your first week or so at home. Alternate between periods of rest and activity.
- To improve the movement and circulation to your wrist, hand, forearm and elbow, we encourage you to move them frequently.
- **DO NOT** carry heavy objects (e.g., groceries, young children) or do heavy physical activities, that stress the shoulder joint.
- When you return to work will depend on the nature of your job, as well as your general health and recovery. Talk with your doctor about this.

Important: *If you are involved in a car accident after surgery and it can be shown that your ability to drive carefully (swerve sharply, check over your shoulder, etc.) was affected by your shoulder condition, then your insurance claim might not be valid. Take this into account when you are considering your ability to drive. It is important that you talk to your doctor about this.*

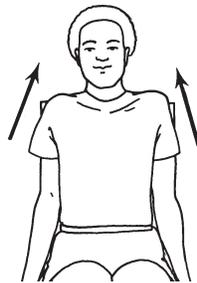
Shoulder Exercises

Spend about 10–15 minutes exercising your shoulder 3 times a day. Start the day of your operation. If you have had a “shoulder block” and can’t move your arm, start exercises the day after your surgery.

- Start with “shoulder shrugs” and “pendular swings” according to your comfort level (see diagrams). Using ice packs on your shoulder before and after your exercises may lessen pain with activity.
- It will be helpful to take your pain medication an hour before exercising.
- If you have difficulty understanding or doing these exercises, contact the physiotherapist that you will be seeing for your shoulder rehabilitation program or contact your surgeon.

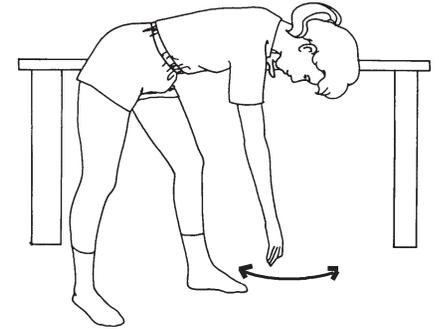
1. Shoulder Shrugs

- Sit upright in a chair (*don't lean against the back of the chair*).
- Pull both shoulders up toward your ears. Count to 5 slowly, then relax, letting your shoulders drop down slowly.
- Repeat 10 times.



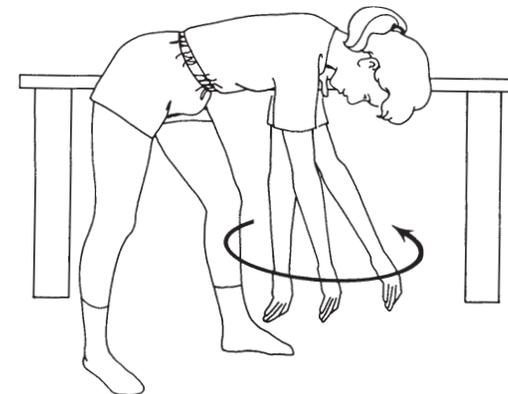
2a. Pendular Swings

- Rest your good arm on the edge of a table.
- Bend over from your waist.
- Allow your affected arm to hang down - it should hang limp and loose.
- Breathing deeply in and out can improve shoulder and arm relaxation.
- Swing it back and forth for a smooth pendular motion about 10 times.



2b. Pendular Swings

- Now allow your affected arm to circle gently in a clockwise direction with circles that grow gradually larger. Repeat 10 times.
- Now go counter clockwise. Repeat 10 times.



Follow-Up Appointment

Call your surgeon's office to make the follow-up appointment.

Notify the Doctor or go to the Emergency Department if any of the following happens

- persistent bleeding continues even after applying direct pressure to the area for 10–15 minutes
- chills and/or fever of 38°C or 100.4°F
- pain does not get better after taking your pain medicine
- persistent nausea and vomiting
- wound redness, swelling, warm to touch and/or pus-like (yellow/green) drainage
- signs of circulation problems (numbness, coolness, change in skin color, arm pain, difficulty moving fingers/hand/elbow) which does not get better by loosening the sling or elevating the arm on pillows while lying flat
- you are unable to pass urine for more than 8–10 hours



Making better
decisions together
with patients
and families

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