

# **POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

## **ARTHROSCOPIC SUBACROMIAL DECOMPRESSION/BICEPS TENOTOMY/DISTAL CLAVICLE EXCISION**

### **DIET**

- Begin with clear liquids and light foods (jellos, soups, etc.)
- Progress to your normal diet if you are not nauseated

### **WOUND CARE**

- Maintain your operative dressing, loosen bandage if swelling of the elbow, wrist, or hand occurs
- It is normal for the shoulder to bleed and swell following surgery – if blood soaks through the bandage, do not become alarmed – reinforce with additional dressing
- Remove surgical dressing on the second post-operative day – if minimal drainage is present, apply band-aids over incisions and change daily
- To avoid infection, keep surgical incisions clean and dry – you may shower by placing a large garbage bag over your sling starting the day after surgery – NO immersion of operative arm (i.e. bath)

### **MEDICATIONS**

- Pain medication is injected into the wound and shoulder joint during surgery – this will wear off within 8-12 hours
- Most patients will require some narcotic pain medication for a short period of time – this can be taken as per directions on the bottle
  - Primary Medication = Norco (Hydrocodone)
    - Take 1 – 2 tablets every 4 – 6 hours as needed
    - Max of 12 pills per day
    - Plan on using it for 2 to 5 days, depending on level of pain
    - Do NOT take additional Tylenol (Acetaminophen) while taking Norco
  - Common side effects of the pain medication are nausea, drowsiness, and constipation – to decrease the side effects, take medication with food.
- If constipation occurs, consider taking an over-the-counter laxative
- If you are having problems with nausea and vomiting, contact the office and ask for **Dr. El-Gazzar** at [newedgeorthopedics@gmail.com](mailto:newedgeorthopedics@gmail.com) or **(201) 985-8967**
- Do not drive a car or operate machinery while taking the narcotic medication
- Ibuprofen 400-600mg (i.e. Advil) may be taken in between the narcotic pain medication to help smooth out the post-operative ‘peaks and valleys’, reduce overall amount of pain medication required, and increase the time intervals between narcotic pain medication usage.

### **ACTIVITY**

- When sleeping or resting, inclined positions (i.e. reclining chair) and a pillow under the forearm for support may provide better comfort
- Do not engage in activities which increase pain/swelling (lifting or any repetitive above shoulder level activities) over the first 7-10 days following surgery
- Avoid long periods of sitting (without arm supported) or long distance traveling for 2 weeks
- NO driving until instructed otherwise by physician
- May return to sedentary work ONLY or school 3-4 days after surgery, if pain is tolerable

### **IMMOBILIZER**

- Your sling should be worn for *comfort purposes only* – Encourage you to discontinue sling once block is worn off.



## **ICE THERAPY**

- Begin immediately after surgery
- Use icing machine continuously or ice packs (if machine not prescribed) every 2 hours for 20 minutes daily until your first post-operative visit – remember to keep arm supported while icing
  - Motion Medical Ice Machine “Gameread”/Vasothermic device may be used.
    - Use unit as frequently as tolerated x 14 days
    - Unit is programmed hour on/hour off continuous of compression and ice alternating
    - If braced\* - Loosen brace to avoid added pressure
    - If issues with Vasothermic device, please contact **Dr. El-Gazzar** or his office **New Edge Orthopedics** at [newedgeorthopedics@gmail.com](mailto:newedgeorthopedics@gmail.com) or (201) 985-8967

## **EXERCISE**

- Begin pendulum, elbow, wrist, and hand exercises 24 hours after surgery – complete 3-4 times per day until your first post-operative visit
- Perform all exercises on discharge exercise sheet unless otherwise indicated
- Formal physical therapy(PT) will begin after initial post operative visit and evaluation

## **FOR EMERGENCY**

- Contact **Dr. El-Gazzar** or his office **New Edge Orthopedics** at [newedgeorthopedics@gmail.com](mailto:newedgeorthopedics@gmail.com) or (201) 985-8967 if any of the following are present:
  - Painful swelling or numbness
  - Unrelenting pain
  - Fever (over 101° – it is normal to have a low grade fever for the first day or two following surgery) or chills
  - Redness around incisions
  - Color change in wrist, hand or lower extremity
  - Continuous drainage or bleeding from incision (a small amount of drainage is expected)
  - Difficulty breathing
  - Excessive nausea/vomiting

