

Post-Operative Instructions

Shoulder Surgery

T. Bryan Smitherman, M.D.

The Center for Orthopedic Surgery

4642 N. Loop 289 Suite 101, Lubbock, TX 79416

(806)797-4985, fax (806)792-8588 www.greatbones.com

Diet: You will begin on clear liquids following surgery. Once you tolerate clear liquids, your diet may be progressed to your normal diet as tolerated. If nausea occurs, try clear liquids and saltine crackers. If this fails to control the nausea, please contact our office.

Activity: You will be placed in a shoulder sling/immobilizer following surgery. You will be allowed to come out of the sling/immobilizer only for bathing and dressing unless specifically instructed otherwise. You may allow your arm to rest by your side during bathing and dressing, but under no circumstances are you to lift the arm, push or catch anything with the operative extremity. It is advisable to allow the elbow to straighten out twice daily for several minutes to prevent elbow stiffness. You may exercise the wrist and hand, but **do not lift anything heavier than a paper-back book with the operative extremity.**

Pain Medication: You will be given a prescription for pain medication at the time of discharge from your facility. You may have this prescription filled at the pharmacy of your choice. There is a 24 hour pharmacy in Lubbock: *CVS Pharmacy @ 5124 34th Street (Brownfield Highway & Slide Road)*. If you cannot tolerate your pain medication, or if your pain is not controlled with your prescribed medication, please contact our office for further instructions. **Please note the outside of these circumstances, pain medications will not be prescribed or refilled by the physician on call after hours or on weekends or holidays. These must be refilled by our office during regular business hours.**

Wound Care: After 48 hours, you may remove your operative dressing. If you had a Pain Pump placed at surgery, it should be empty approximately 48 hours after surgery. Once it is empty, pull the catheter gently and discard the entire apparatus (it is all disposable). You should receive a video regarding the pain pump at the time of discharge. You may shower once the

dressing is removed. Do not let water run directly upon the operative site, but clean it with alcohol after bathing. Apply a large Band-Aid dressing to cover all wounds.

Blood Clot Prevention: Early motion of the hand, wrist and elbow can be effective methods to prevent deep venous thrombosis (blood clots). If not allergic we also recommend one 325mg Aspirin daily for 6 weeks following your surgery for further protection.

Clinic Follow-up: A follow-up appointment will, in most cases, be scheduled for you in advance and given to you at the time of your pre-operative office visit. This appointment will be confirmed by your facility prior to discharge (during office hours). If you are discharged after the office has closed or on weekend or holidays and you have a question regarding your follow-up appointment, please contact our office during office hours.

When do I call the doctor?

- *If I begin to run a temperature over 101.5 degrees Fahrenheit
- *If I have uncontrollable nausea/vomiting post-operatively
- *If I have progressive bleeding through my dressings.
- *If I have progressive redness developing around my incisions
- *If I develop drainage from my incisions
- *If I fall or have an accident and the usual measures (ice, rest, elevation, and pain medications) do not relieve the pain
- *If I develop sudden shortness of breath or chest pain