

Post-Op Instructions Clavicle Open Reduction and Internal Fixation

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 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 **3rd post-operative day** – if minimal drainage is present, apply band-aids or a clean dressing over incisions and change daily.
- To avoid infection, keep surgical incisions clean and dry – you may shower by placing a plastic covering over the surgical site beginning the day after surgery.
- You can get your wound wet in the shower on the **7th post-operative day**. NO immersion in a bath until given approval by our office.

MEDICATIONS

- Local anesthetics are injected into the wound and around the incision at the time of surgery. This will wear off within 8-12 hours and it is not uncommon for patients to encounter more pain on the first or second day after surgery when swelling peaks.
- Most patients will require some narcotic pain medication for a short period of time – this can be taken as per directions on the bottle.
- Common side effects of the pain medication are nausea, drowsiness, and constipation. To decrease the side effects, take the 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 to possibly have your medications changed.
- Do not drive a car or operate machinery while taking the narcotic medication or while in sling.
- If your provider discussed taking a blood thinner like aspirin after surgery please take it as directed. Please contact the office should severe distal arm pain occur or significant swelling of the distal arm and/or hand occur.

ACTIVITY

- You are to wear the sling placed at surgery for 4-6 weeks.
- When sleeping or resting, inclined positions (ie: reclining chair) and a pillow under the forearm for support may provide better comfort
- Do not engage in activities which increase pain/swelling. Unless otherwise instructed the arm should remain in the sling at all times.
- Avoid long periods of sitting or long distance traveling for 2 weeks.
- NO driving until instructed otherwise by physician, it is illegal to drive in a sling
- May return to sedentary work ONLY or school when ready and able, if pain is tolerable and off narcotics

IMMOBILIZER (if prescribed)

- Your sling is to be worn 4-6 weeks following surgery
- Xrays will be taken at your post op appointments to determine full sling immobilization period
- If there are 24 hours a day, you should be in the sling 23.5 hours. Removal only for hygiene, dressing, and home exercises (as instructed by our office).

ICE THERAPY

- Icing is very important in the initial post-operative period and should begin immediately after surgery.
- Use ice packs (if machine not prescribed) for 45 minutes every 2 hours daily until your first post-operative visit. Care should be taken with icing to avoid frostbite to the skin.



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EXERCISE

- Begin exercises 24 hours after surgery unless otherwise instructed.
- While maintaining your elbow by the side, begin elbow, hand, and wrist exercises immediately.
- Shoulder stiffness and discomfort is normal a few days after surgery.
- Avoid movement of the arm against gravity or away from the body.

EMERGENCIES**

- Contact our office M-F 8:00AM – 5:00PM at 504-897-6351
- Painful swelling or numbness (note that some swelling and numbness is normal)
- 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 distal arm and/or hand
- Continuous drainage or bleeding from incision (a small amount of drainage is expected)
- Difficulty breathing
- Excessive nausea/vomiting
- Calf pain
- If you have an emergency that requires immediate attention proceed to the nearest emergency room.

FOLLOW-UP CARE/QUESTIONS

- If you do not already have a post-operative appointment scheduled, please contact our office at 504-897-6351 to schedule.
- Typically, the first post-operative appointment following surgery is 10-14 days following surgery
- If you have any further questions please contact us during office hours



POST OPERATIVE SHOULDER EXERCISES

WRIST FLEXION / EXTENSION



Actively bend wrist forward.
Then backwards as far as you can.
Repeat 10-15 times. Do 3 sessions per day.

ELBOW FLEXION / EXTENSION



With palm either UP, DOWN, or THUMBSIDE UP
gently bend elbow as far as possible.
Hold for 5 seconds.
Then straighten arm as far as possible.
Repeat 10-15 times. Do 3 sessions per day.
****DO NOT PERFORM THIS EXERCISE IF
BICEP TENODESIS WAS PERFORMED****