

AHPN Glendale Orthopaedics

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Postoperative Instructions

Your surgery involved the following:

- Distal Biceps repair
- Tennis Elbow debridement and repair
- Elbow Arthroscopy
- Open reduction internal fixation (ORIF)
- Cubital tunnel release
- Other:

Brace

- You do not require a sling.
- You have been placed in a sling. You may remove the sling to bend and straighten the elbow three times a day. You may also remove the sling for bathing. Otherwise, remain in your sling at all times, including while asleep. Further discussion of the length of time sling and bolster use are included in your physical therapy instructions.
- You have been placed into a splint. Do not remove splint. We will remove it at your first post operative visit.
- Other:

Physical therapy

- Do not begin physical therapy until your first postoperative visit.
- Begin physical therapy immediately. You will be given a protocol to give to your therapist.
- Other:

Activity

Ice: Apply ice to the elbow in a waterproof bag for 30 minutes each hour while awake

Sleeping: Keep your arm in the sling or splint even while sleeping. Occasionally, some patients prefer to sleep in a recliner or propped up in bed with several pillows.

Activities: Do not use your operative arm or hand for *any* lifting. Avoid long distance traveling for 2 weeks. Avoid sexual activity for 2 weeks.

Driving: NO driving until first postoperative visit, unless instructed otherwise

Incision care

Keep the incision clean and dry after surgery.

You may shower, keep the incision or splint dry by draping the arm with a plastic bag or saran wrap

Do NOT use *any* ointments/creams/lotions on your incisions, unless otherwise directed

Dressing changes

Your elbow is dressed in sterile bandages, gauze, bandages and tape.

- Do not change your dressings until post-op day 3. For example, if you had surgery on Wednesday, you would change your dressings on Saturday. Change your dressings daily afterwards.

- Do not remove the splint until seen for your first post op check

Sutures will be removed at your first post op appointment.

Bathing

You may shower, keep the incision dry by draping the arm with a plastic bag or saran wrap

NO baths, swimming or soaking the incision until the incision is completely healed at about 4 weeks.

When in the shower, have an old chair or stool to sit on to prevent slips or falls

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Please follow these instructions:

Medication

Pain medications: Generally, a short acting narcotic drug is prescribed to you on discharge 1. The specific drug varies from patient to patient.

Take this medicine only as prescribed. Narcotic medicines may make you drowsy and/or dizzy, therefore driving a car or operating machinery is NOT ALLOWED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.

Please take note of the prescription refill protocol:

- **You MUST give your surgeon's office at least 48 hours notice for any refill**
- **Prescriptions will NOT be filled over the weekend**

Nausea: Vistaril 25mg. Take 1 tablet every 8 hours as required for nausea or vomiting.

The anesthesia or pain medications can make some individuals nauseous. If you experience moderate nausea or vomiting, take as directed. Vistaril can also be taken to help with sleep.

Constipation: Colace. Take 1 tablet nightly while taking pain medications. This is an over the counter medicine that you may purchase.

The pain medications we provide can result in mild-to-moderate constipation. It is important to take a stool softener to prevent constipation.

Other:

Follow-up care

You should have an appointment with your surgeon 7-10 days after your surgery. Call 818-547-0608 to make this appointment if it has not already been made for you at the time of initially scheduling surgery.

Diet

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

When to call your surgeon

Complications after shoulder surgery are fortunately very rare.

Call the office at 818-547-0608 if any of the following occur:

- Fever > 101.5°F, chills
- Increasing leg pain
- Increasing swelling in calf or foot
- Calf pain
- Numbness or tingling in leg, foot or arm
- Hives, itching, rashes
- Shortness of breath or chest pain
- Vomiting that lasts more than 8 to 12 hours post op
- Drainage from incision sites that continues for more than 5 days follow surgery.