

## DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING SHOULDER ARTHROSCOPY

### **PAIN CONTROL**

- A prescription for pain medication will be given to you by your doctor prior to your discharge from the hospital. These medications are used to reduce your pain ***and must not be taken any more often than prescribed***. In an effort to keep your pain under good control, you should take the pain medication routinely as prescribed during the first 24-48 hours following surgery. Then, as the pain lessens, begin taking it as needed (within the prescribed guidelines). As you become more comfortable, you may substitute Tylenol for pain control.
- Pain medication should be taken with food as this will help to prevent any stomach upset.
- Requests for pain medication should be made during normal office hours. Please Note: Pain medication will **only** be ordered during regular office hours.
- **Do not drive while taking pain medications.**
- **Do not drink alcoholic beverages while taking pain medications.**
- Ice may be used to your shoulder to help with swelling and pain relief. If you have been given a shoulder cooling device, use it as much as necessary to help reduce your pain. Change the ice in the cooler as needed to control your discomfort.
- You may resume your routine medications unless otherwise instructed.
- Often pain medication and inactivity cause constipation. Eat high fiber foods (fresh fruits, vegetables, bran) and increase your fluid intake if possible. Also, you may purchase Pericolace, a stool softener, at any pharmacy to help with constipation. Take this two times per day.
- The goal is to have you off narcotics 4-6 weeks post operatively.

### **WOUND CARE**

- Bleeding during the first 24 hours following surgery is normal. If bloody drainage is noted through your dressing, do not remove the existing dressing, but apply a fresh layer of dressing over top. Apply direct pressure over the area where the drainage is noted. Apply ice to the area. If drainage continues throughout the night, call the office for further instructions.
- Remove your dressing on the third day after surgery. You will have sutures and possibly steri-strips to close your incision. Do not remove the steri-strips as they will fall off on their own. Sutures will be removed at your first post-op appointment. You may place a new dressing if there is drainage or if the incision is irritated by clothing.
- You may shower after your first dressing change as long as there is no drainage. Do not soak your incisional area until after your follow up appointment. Do not scrub your incision area, but pat it dry after your shower.
- Swelling and discoloration/bruising of the shoulder and arm are expected. This will gradually resolve.

### **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

- Wear your arm sling/immobilizer unless you are doing your exercises as instructed. Wiggle your fingers frequently (every 1-2 hours).
- Refer to the discharge instructions attached to this document that refers to weight bearing restrictions.
- Until you resume more normal activity, work at pumping your ankles frequently (every 1-2 hours). This helps with circulation and preventing blood clots from forming. Also elevate your legs when sitting.
- Take rest periods throughout the day.
- You will be going to Physical Therapy at some time following this type of surgery. Your doctor will determine the starting date and the frequency of therapy. It may not begin until after your first post-op appointment.
- Your doctor will determine when you may begin driving.

#### **FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENT**

- You should be seen in the office for follow up **10-14 days** following your surgery. A wound check, details of your surgery, and expectations will be reviewed. **Call the office today if you do not already have an appointment.**
- OAM has a physician available by phone 24 hours per day for **EMERGENCY** orthopaedic needs. Routine questions, including requests for pain medication, are best handled during weekday business hours. (616) 459-7101.

#### **QUESTIONS?**

- If you have any questions that have not been answered, please call OAM at **(616) 459-7101.**