

SHOULDER CARE AFTER ARTHROSCOPY

Following the arthroscopy there are several items that can assist in your recovery, as well as help in your understanding of what to expect.

If you are given pictures upon leaving the hospital please bring them to your first follow-up visit.

- Upon returning home after your surgery it is important that you apply ice to your shoulder for approximately 30 minutes every two hours while you are awake. This helps minimize the swelling from the surgery and should be continued especially during the first 48 hours. Continue icing as needed based on pain and swelling. In addition, it may be found to be more comfortable to sleep in a propped-up position, as this minimizes the swelling that can occur in the shoulder. If you find that the shoulder is not that painful then this does not need to be done.
- The surgical dressing that is applied after surgery provides a sterile field and should be left intact for two days; you may remove it at that time and place band-aids over the sutures. Because fluid is used during the arthroscopy, frequently the dressing may become blood stained and this is normal. Any tapes or steri-strips over the incisions should be left in place. You can shower on the first morning after surgery, but it is important to minimize the amount of water that comes in contact with the wounds until the sutures are removed. Do not soak the shoulder in a tub or swimming pool and do not scrub over the incisions, as this increases the risk of infection. If there are any signs of increased swelling, redness, drainage or other signs of infection, please contact our office immediately.
- If you have had a Rotator Cuff Repair, Stabilization or Labral Repair your post-operative brace will be determined at the time of surgery. This may include a sling or an immobilizer. This should be worn for 3-4 weeks after surgery unless otherwise instructed. You may remove your arm from the immobilizer several times a day to bend and straighten your elbow, use your hand such as squeezing a ball, and doing pendulum exercises (circle with the elbow straight and arm close to the body). Physical therapy is common after surgery; however, how soon it is initiated varies and is determined by Dr. Carter.
- If you have had a Decompression or Lysis of Adhesions a sling is applied after surgery and you are free to move the arm as you feel comfortable and discontinue the sling one day after surgery. In fact, most patients are encouraged to use the arm so that they do not develop a "frozen shoulder". You should also bend and straighten your elbow and move your wrist to remove swelling that may develop in your forearm. However, it is prudent that you do not do too much with the arm. Do not lift any weights or do any strenuous activities following your surgery until approved by Dr. Carter. If you had a Lysis Of Adhesions physical therapy will start a day or two after surgery.
- You will be given a prescription for pain medication after your surgery and this may cause drowsiness. Please do not operate a motor vehicle when taking the medication due to the risk of an accident occurring.
- If you have not made a follow-up appointment before your surgery, you should do so the day after your operation. The initial follow-up visit is routinely 7-10 days after your operation.

If you have any additional questions or concerns please feel free to contact our office. (602) 277-6211