

Andrew J. Riff MD, IU Health Orthopedics and Sports Medicine

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317-944-9400: Calls during business hours (8-4:30 M-F) will be routed to Dr. Riff's office, calls outside of business hours will be routed to the paging system.

Post-Operative Instructions – Shoulder Surgery

1. Norco 5/325mg (hydrocodone/acetaminophen): This is used for pain control. Take 1-2 tablets every 4-6 hours as needed for pain. Pain levels are highest on days 1 thru 3 post op, so you will want to take this on a regular schedule. After that, take as needed. Do not drive, drink alcohol or take Tylenol while taking this medication.
2. Colace 100mg (over the counter): Take two 100mg tablets (200mg), twice daily to prevent constipation after surgery.
3. Aspirin 81mg (over the counter): Take one 81mg tablet daily for 3 weeks to minimize your risk of a blood clot.

**A regional anesthetic is provided which typically provides pain relief for 8-12 hours after surgery, plan to take pain medication throughout the afternoon and early evening to ease the transition.

Wound Care: Leave the big surgical bandage on and do not shower for 48 hours after surgery. It is normal for the shoulder to bleed and swell following surgery. If blood soaks onto or through the dressing, this is not significant cause for concern. This is common for the first 24-48 hours after surgery. You may simply reinforce the dressing with gauze or change to a new clean dry gauze. After 48 hours, remove bandages, and apply waterproof Band-aids to the incision(s) prior to showering (available at Walgreens or CVS). To see bloody soaked fluids on bandages is normal. Leave the steristrips (white tape) on. Replace waterproof bandages with a clean dry regular Bandaid over each incision, after showering. Do not cut any stitches or apply any ointments or lotions to the wounds. Do not soak in any pool or bath water until 4 weeks after surgery.

Physical Therapy: You may initiate gentle range of motion beginning the day of surgery as directed by Dr. Riff. Dr. Riff will give you a prescription for PT at your first postoperative visit.

Sling: Your sling should be worn for 4 weeks. You should only come out of the sling for exercises and while bathing. You should wear your sling while sleeping.

Ice Therapy: It is very important to keep ice on your shoulder during the initial post-operative period (first 5-7 days). This should begin immediately after surgery. Use an ice machine continuously or ice packs (if no machine used) for 20-30 minutes every 2 hours daily until your sutures are removed. Care should be taken to avoid frostbite while icing by making sure the ice is not directly touching the skin.

Follow-up: You will need to follow up in clinic with Dr. Riff in 10-14 days. Please call central scheduling to make an appointment. At this visit you will receive updated instructions on your weight bearing, brace use and physical therapy.

When should you contact the office?

- If you have a fever >101.4 (a low grade temp is expected after surgery), but let us know if it gets this high!
- You develop chills or sweats
- You have pus or excessive bloody drainage from the wound, or if you have pain or redness surrounding the incision sites.
- You have nausea and vomiting that will not resolve with Zofran.
- Shortness of breath or chest pain