

Post-op PATIENT Instructions: PROXIMAL HUMERUS ORIF

Dressing: A dressing has been applied to your shoulder to absorb any fluid/blood. A small amount of blood on the dressing is expected. Your nurse will teach you how to change your dressing. Change the dressing each day, leaving the steri-strips on. Unless directed by your surgeon, **no salves, balms, or ointments (even antibiotic ointments) to the incisions**. Soreness and bruising is expected for several days afterward. Showering is permitted 72 hours after surgery with the incisions covered. After showering, apply a new dry dressing. **Do NOT soak the incisions in a bathtub. No swimming/hot-tubs/lakes or saltwater until cleared by your surgeon.**

Ice: Ice is a powerful anti-inflammatory. Icepacks/wraps will help to reduce swelling and pain. Use liberally (20-30 min./session), but protect the skin from direct contact (and frostbite).

Activity: **NO ACTIVE ATTEMPTING TO LIFT THE ARM** Wear the immobilizer/sling as directed below. The forearm strap may be removed for hand, wrist, and elbow range of motion which decreases extremity swelling. Sleeping in a recliner with pillows behind the elbow to keep the arm across the belly may provide additional comfort. **No driving until permission is given by your surgeon.**

Pain: A nerve block has been performed for immediate post-op pain control by the anesthesiologist. It typically “wears off” at about 8-12 hrs following surgery. A narcotic (taken every 3-4hrs as needed for breakthrough pain) is given to control your pain. **Begin taking these pain medications when you BEGIN experiencing pain!** These meds can take 30-45 minutes to start “working”. You do not want to play “catch-up” by letting your pain get out of control. Nausea, drowsiness, and constipation are common side effects of narcotics. Adequate fluid intake and a stool softener obtained over the counter from your local pharmacy is recommended to minimize constipation. Call the office if you are unable to tolerate your medication.

Precautions: Call the office **(813) 684-2663** if you develop: temperatures $>101^{\circ}\text{F}$, shortness of breath, chest pain, uncontrolled pain, marked redness/hives, persistent drainage, new onset numbness, significant incisional/calf swelling, or any other concerns.

Post-operative Appointment:

- **Call (813) 684-2663 today to make a post-operative appointment to see your surgeon 10-14 days following your surgery.**

Special Instructions: _____ (Additionally, follow any indicated instructions below.)

Physical therapy: prescription will be given at the 1st post op visit

Sling / Shoulder Brace: for 6 weeks; (**NO DRIVING WHILE IN SLING!**)

Ice (Cryotherapy) Unit: protect/check skin regularly

****A blood thinner to prevent blood clots should be taken for 6 weeks following surgery****