



Carrie Baxter; PT

Brent Brittain; PT

Heather Martens; PT

Anita Khokhar; PTA

1818 E. 23rd Avenue . Hutchinson, KS 67502-1106 . Phone 620-665-7766 . Fax 620-662-2811

Upper Extremity Home Instructions after Surgery

Dressing Care: After surgery you will have steri-strips or stitches with a cotton dressing over your incisions. The large cotton dressings will be removed at doctor's appt. 24 hours after surgery. The steri-strips or stitches will not be removed for 10-14 days after surgery. Your therapist will use a special lotion to remove the yellow solution from you skin. This solution does not clean off with soap and water. Watch the incisions for excessive bleeding or unusual drainage. If you have excessive swelling or pain, call your surgeon.

Bathing/Showering Guidelines: Keep your incisions dry until they are healed. Your incisions should be covered with waterproof bandages before you bathe or shower. Remove waterproof bandages after shower to allow air to get to the incisions. These can be purchased at a discount store.

Ice/Polar Pack Use: Keep ice on for 10-20 minutes at a time, 5 times a day. Polar packs can be used as frequently as possible. Be sure to use a towel between your skin and the pack to prevent frostbite.

Exercises: You may start the exercises the same day of your surgery, if not start them by the following morning. These are important to prevent stiffness and blood pooling. If an exercise is confusing, painful, or difficult, discontinue until your next physical therapy visit. Shoulder surgery is highly variable and based on the surgeon's operative findings your exercises may change.

Proper Use of Sling: Wear your sling at all times except when showering or exercising. You must also wear this sling at night when sleeping. Wear the shower sling provided to you when showering.

Precautions: Remember to not raise or move your arm without assistance until instructed by your doctor or therapist. It is important to allow time for the surgery to heal.

Other: It may be more comfortable to sleep in the recliner after surgery than in bed. Use a pillow under your arm for more support and sleep in sling.