

Rotator Cuff Repair

With or without subacromial decompression, distal clavicle resection, or biceps tenodesis

Incision Care:

- Remove large bandage 3 days after surgery but leave the steri-strips on the actual incisions. You may shower normally at this time and the steri strips will fall off on their own with time.
- No soaking of the incisions until full healing, typically 6 weeks. This means no baths, jacuzzi, lakes, rivers, swimming pools, etc.
- Additional bandages are not necessary.

Sling: You will be in a sling for **6 weeks**

- Please remain in this sling unless otherwise specified. Only remove the sling while showering.
- The sling should support your arm with your elbow at a 90 degree angle in front of you with the elbow sitting all the way in the back of the sling. If there is a pillow or body bar attached, the pillow should be between your body and the arm keeping the arm held slightly away from you. If this is not the case, please call our office to help adjust it.
- The ball or cushion attached to the sling may be used to help with swelling and promoting blood flow to the extremity
- **No pushing, pulling, overhead activities, or lifting with the affected arm**

Ice/elevation:

- Swelling of the shoulder and arm is to be expected. You may leave the ice on for 20 minutes at a time, each hour throughout the day. If the upper extremity becomes painful to touch or becomes red, hot, and swollen, call our office immediately

Physical Therapy:

- This is the most important part of your recovery and requires daily exercises at home as well as with a physical therapist during the week.
- Therapy should begin 1 week after surgery. Please have this scheduled prior to surgery so there is no lapse in your recovery period.
- Most patients are in formal therapy for 3-6 months after surgery. For the best results, we suggest continuing a home therapy program for up to 1 year.

Driving

- It is NOT recommended that you drive while taking narcotic pain medication. It is NOT recommended that you drive while in the sling.

Returning to work:

- Sedentary desk jobs or those who work from home may return 2-4 weeks after surgery. This will be evaluated at the first post-op visit. Physically demanding jobs that require extended periods of walking or heavy lifting may expect to return full duty closer to 3 months. Return to light duty is an option if available.

Red Flags:

These are reasons to contact the office immediately

- Fever of greater than 100.4 F, pus or continuous bleeding from the incision site
- Uncontrolled nausea or vomiting, lack of bowel movement 4 days after surgery
- Inability to move your arm more than 48 hours after surgery
- Unusual shortness of breath or chest pain