

## What To Expect After Surgery

Chase D. Smith, MD

### ELBOW ARTHROSCOPY/ACCELERATED BICEP REPAIR

#### Post-Operative Care

- You will be in a sling for 1-2 weeks following surgery. Wear at all times, except when bathing and doing physical therapy.
- Ice the area several times per day for 20 minutes at a time (minimum of 20 minutes between sessions).
- You should be able to return to work/school as soon as you feel comfortable, likely 2-5 days.
- The dressings may be removed the day after surgery for bathing. If you are attending therapy the day after surgery, the therapist will remove the dressings for you, otherwise, you will be instructed how to manage this.
- Do not get the incisions wet until your post-op visit. Cover with waterproof bandages when bathing.

#### Pain Control

- Ice will help control swelling and pain.
- We recommend you take the pain medication, as prescribed for the first 24-48 hours, then decrease as tolerated.
- Schedule pain medication so that you can take a dose about 30 minutes prior to physical therapy sessions.
- Even with pain medication, some discomfort or pain is normal. However, if you are experiencing a *significant increase* in pain, please notify our office at (334)793-2663.
- You should receive a prescription for pain medicine and anti-nausea medication before leaving the hospital.

#### Infection Prevention

- Infection prevention is always one of our primary goals.
- You received an antibiotic through your IV at the time of surgery, therefore will not need an oral antibiotic.
- It is normal to have swelling, discomfort, some heat around the surgery site, a low grade fever (<100 degrees), and clear/pink drainage.
- Notify our office if, after 24 hours, you have *marked and sudden increase* in swelling, pain, or heat in the joint or white/yellow discharge or persistent fever > 100 degrees after 325 mg of Tylenol.
- Clean the incisions daily with betadine, allow to dry and cover with a clean, dry bandage

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### Physical Therapy

- You will begin physical therapy on the first or second business day after surgery. During the first session, the primary goal should be pain and swelling control and beginning to work through the prescribed rehabilitation protocol.
- Your first physical therapy appointment will need to be scheduled prior to surgery. We will assist you to determine your physical therapy location and will fax the necessary paperwork to the therapy facility. You will also receive a copy. Physical Therapy is typically recommended 2-3 times per week for 3-4 months.

### Follow-Up

- **We recommend that you not drive until you are off all pain medication and can safely maneuver the car without putting yourself or others at risk.**
- Before leaving the hospital, you will receive your follow-up appointment information, surgery pictures (if applicable), discharge instructions, etc.