

What To Expect After Surgery
Chase D. Smith, MD
SHOULDER ARTHROSCOPY
(ROTATOR CUFF OR LABRAL REPAIR)

Post-Operative Care

- You will be in a sling for 4-6 weeks following surgery.
- 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.
- Do not get the incisions wet until your post-op visit. Cover with waterproof bandages when bathing.
- You should wear your sling at all times. Remove only to shower and do physical therapy

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.

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, surgery pictures (if applicable), discharge instructions, etc.