

Andrew J. Pastor, M.D.

Elbow Arthroscopy Post Op Instructions

Activity level- The more you are able to allow your body to rest initially, the better and faster your recovery. Sleeping may be difficult the first few days after surgery and comfortable positioning is important. Sleeping in a slightly inclined position with the elbow higher than the heart is usually most comfortable and can be done best with pillows propping up the elbow.

Precautions/activities to avoid- No lifting anything heavier than a coffee cup for two weeks.

Sling- The sling you are in is for comfort and to support the weight of your arm. You **may** come out of the sling and do pendulum exercises to keep your shoulder supple and flex/extend your elbow and wrist. The sling **may** be discontinued after 4 days or whenever it isn't helpful. Desktop level activities such as typing are permitted as tolerated.

Dressings- Dressings can be removed after **4 days** and the Steri-Strips will fall off on their own in 7-10 days. You may get incisions wet in the shower if they are completely sealed over and dry. Clean with simple soap and water and pat dry. Do not soak the wounds for the 2 weeks following surgery! You may use lotion on the skin except over the incisions. Do not apply any special ointments or creams to the incision until the skin is completely healed which is typically 3 weeks after surgery.

Home exercises- Rest is most important the first couple of days after surgery. You **should** be bending and extending your elbow some in the bulky dressing in the first couple of days. After the dressing is removed, you **should** continue bending and extending the elbow as well as pointing your open hand to the ceiling and floor with the elbow at your side and bent at 90 degrees. Physical therapy may be prescribed when you return for follow up. This will consist of a home exercise program and possibly formal sessions with a therapist.

Return to work- You may return to work depending upon your job description as early as 3 to 4 days after your surgery. You will need to be off

all narcotic pain medication for your brain to function normally. Jobs that have more physical requirements may require longer time away. Driving requires being off all narcotic pain medication.

Report any of the following symptoms immediately: Fever greater than 101° F, calf pain, pain not controlled by pain medications, redness swelling specific to the incision site, excessive bleeding, problems with pain medication, numbness and tingling of the hand or arm. You may call our office and speak with a member of our office staff at **(425) 412-1875**.

Follow up- Follow up with Dr. Pastor will be within two weeks following surgery. This appointment should have been pre-arranged prior to surgery. You will follow up again at 6 and 12 weeks after surgery.

Thank you! I appreciate the opportunity to participate in your care.

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'Andrew J. Pastor'.

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based on protocols established by Winston J. Warne, M.D. - Chief of Shoulder surgery at the University of Washington Medical Center