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SPECIALIZING IN SHOULDER & KNEE SURGERY

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Post-Operative Instructions: Rotator Cuff Repair

1. **Before surgery, please call Dr. Rudzki's MA to schedule your first postop appointment for 7-10 days post-op.** At the 1st post-op appointment, we will remove your dressings, remove your sutures, and discuss the plan for your therapy and recovery. If you have staples, they will be removed at your 2nd postop, and we will determine the timeframe for the 2nd post-op appointment your 1st post-op appointment.
2. If you develop a fever (temperature greater than 101.5 F), redness or drainage from the surgical incision site, please call our office to arrange for an evaluation.
3. You will receive two prescriptions for pain medication (typically morphine sulfate & Oxycodone).
 - These pain medications are all opioid narcotic derivatives, which have potential side effects that include constipation, nausea and sleepiness. Please take over the counter laxatives and stool softeners (ex. Peri-Colace, MiraLax, etc.), drink a lot of water, and eat dried apricots/ prunes 3x/day. These medications should not be taken on an empty stomach.
 - Please **do not take any Motrin, Ibuprofen, or Aleve (NSAIDs)** as these may impair your reconstructed ligament from healing.
4. You may slowly resume a regular diet as tolerated. We recommend you start slowly with clear liquids, diluted Gatorade, chicken/beef broth & crackers:
 - As soon as you get home, take small bites of food (1/4 turkey sandwich, diluted Gatorade, chicken soup, crackers) and 30 minutes later take your first pain pill (Oxycodone). Repeat this process 45-60 minutes later and take a 2nd pain pill (Oxycodone). Repeat again 45-60 minutes later and take a morphine sulfate. From this point forward, take Oxycodone 1-2 tabs every 4-6 hrs and morphine sulfate 1 tab every 12 hours. **It's important to stay ahead of pain, but do not take the pain pills if you are sedated. If you are 21 years or older, take 1 baby aspirin twice a day for DVT prophylaxis.**
5. Remove the dressings on the 2nd day after surgery. Apply Band-Aids loosely over the incisions and change them every 2-3 days as needed. Please do not use Bacitracin, Neosporin or any other creams under the bandages.
 - **Do not shower or get your incision wet until cleared to do so by Dr. Rudzki.**
6. Apply the Game Ready Ice as often as possible for the first 10-14 days; then at least 4-6 times each day for 30 minutes and after each time you do your exercises. The Game Ready Unit should be set to cool for 30 minutes & then go off for 30 minutes. Take a one hour break every 4-6 hrs. Make sure incisions stay dry.
7. Keep your shoulder in the sling with the elbow bent at ~ 90 degrees. The sling should not be too tight or too loose. Your elbow should rest at your side. Your sling must be worn for 6 weeks to provide both comfort and support. You may take the waist band off of the sling when out of bed, but we would like you to wear it at night if possible.
 - It will be helpful to sleep sitting up or propped up with pillows and with a pillow supporting your elbow. This will prevent excessive strain on the repair. Place a pillow or blanket behind the bottom of your triceps/back of the elbow.
8. Only Passive Shoulder Motion is allowed for the first 6 weeks after surgery. You may feel very comfortable; however any active lifting or use of your arm will strain the repair and may prevent it from healing. Your sling may be removed intermittently to allow passive elbow motion (bend & straighten) as well as gentle pendulum swings/arm hangs. You may

exercise your hands by squeezing a tennis ball or ball of socks (this will help to decrease any swelling in your hand and fingers).

Dr. Rudzki's MA can be reached at 202-787-5601 ext 652 or RudzkiMA@alignedortho.com

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