

## **DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING TOTAL SHOULDER SURGERY**

### PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Wear your sling/immobilizer unless you are doing your exercises as instructed by Physical Therapy or your doctor.
- Take rest periods throughout the day.
- Physical Therapy will begin after your follow up appointment. The frequency of therapy will be determined by your doctor.
- Your doctor will determine when you may begin driving.

### WOUND CARE

- The hospital dressing may be removed after 2-3 days. However, if you are more comfortable keeping a dressing on your incision site, change it daily or if it becomes wet. You will have sutures or staples to close your incision.
- You may shower with your incision uncovered as long as it is not draining. Pat the incision dry after showering. If your incision is draining, it should be kept covered while showering. Remove the dressing after showering and pat the incision dry.
- Swelling and discoloration/bruising of the shoulder and arm are expected. This will gradually resolve.

### MEDICATIONS

- A prescription for pain medication may be given to you by your doctor prior to your discharge from the hospital. These medications are used to reduce your pain ***and must not be taken any more often than prescribed.*** In an effort to keep your pain under good control, you should take the pain medication routinely as prescribed during the first 24-48 hours following surgery. Then, as the pain lessens, begin taking it as needed (within the prescribed guidelines). As you become more comfortable, you may substitute Tylenol for pain control.
- Pain medication should be taken with food as this will help to prevent any stomach upset.
- Requests for pain medication should be made during normal office hours. Please Note: Pain medication will **only** be ordered during regular office hours, Monday through Friday from 8AM to 5PM.
- **Do not drive while taking pain medication.**
- **Do not drink alcoholic beverages while taking pain medication.**
- The goal is to have you off narcotic medication 6-8 weeks after surgery.
- Take one regular aspirin twice a day for two weeks following surgery. This thins your blood and helps to prevent blood clots from forming.  
**DO NOT TAKE ASPIRIN** if you have an allergy to aspirin, have a history of ulcer disease, or if another blood thinning medication, such as ibuprofen, was ordered for you when you were discharged from the hospital.
- You may resume your routine medications unless otherwise instructed.

- Often pain medication and inactivity cause constipation. Eat high fiber foods (fresh fruits, vegetables, bran) and increase your fluid intake if possible. Also, you may purchase Pericolace, a stool softener, at any pharmacy to aid in alleviating your constipation. Take this two times per day.

#### OTHER INFORMATION

- Be aware that your joint may trigger metal detection devices.
- You may obtain a temporary handicap parking permit application from this office if you feel it is needed.

#### FUTURE DENTAL OR SURGICAL PROCEDURES

- It is important that you pre-medicate with antibiotics for dental work, bowel, or urinary tract procedures (including teeth cleaning, colonoscopy, cystoscopy, and catheter placement). Your dentist/doctor will order an antibiotic for you prior to these procedures to prevent microorganisms from spreading to your new joint. **IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU TAKE THESE PRECAUTIONS FOR YOUR WHOLE LIFE.**

#### PRECAUTIONS

##### *Notify the office if you:*

- Develop new or more severe pain that can not be controlled by the pain medication.
- Develop redness, swelling, drainage, foul odor from your incision.
- Develop calf pain or tenderness.
- Have persistent numbness/tingling of the affected arm.
- Develop a temperature greater than 100.5 that is not associated with any other illness. It is not necessary to take your temperature every day. If you feel warm, take your temperature.
- Have any questions or problems.

#### FOLLOW UP

- You should be seen in the office for a wound check 10-14 days following your surgery. If you do not already have an appointment, please call the office today.
- Our office has a physician available by phone 24 hours a day for emergency orthopaedic needs. Routine questions, including requests for pain medication, are best handled during weekday business hours, Monday through Friday, from 8:00am until 5:00pm.