

# *You are having shoulder surgery: What to expect.....*

- It is normal to have swelling and discomfort after surgery that may last anywhere from days to a week or even slightly longer.
- If you had a nerve block with your surgery, your arm may feel numb for up to 12 to 24 hours after surgery.
- Following your surgery you will be provided with narcotic medications. These medications are designed to help with, but not take away completely, the post-operative pain. **DO NOT TAKE MORE OF THE PAIN MEDICATION!!!!!!!!!!**
- If you feel as though the pain is unbearable despite taking the pain medications AS PRESCRIBED, then your only other option is to go to the emergency room for pain control/management. I cannot safely prescribe you anything stronger that can be taken without constant monitoring.

## **MEDICATIONS**

*The following medications are combination drugs that contain **TYLENOL** (in addition to the narcotic):*

- Percocet
- Vicodin
- Tylenol #3
- Endocet
- Ultracet
- Lorcet
- Lortab
- Roxicet

**IF you were prescribed one of these combination medications (or another combination drug containing Tylenol), YOU CANNOT TAKE TYLENOL in addition to taking any of these medications.** Tylenol, when taken in excessive doses, can cause liver damage. The prescribed amount of these above listed drugs totals the maximum amount of Tylenol per day that you can have without doing damage to your liver. This is why you should always take these medications as prescribed and not more frequently.

- Do not drive or operate heavy machinery while taking narcotic medications.**

- ❑ **If you are having a rotator cuff repair, labral repair or biceps tenodesis, please do not take any anti-inflammatory medications (Aleve, Advil, Motrin, Ibuprofen, Naproxen) unless instructed to do so.**

- ❑ **Common side effects of narcotic pain medications:**

- Constipation
- Itching
- Nausea

\*To help avoid constipation, drink plenty of water in addition to taking an over the counter stool softener such as Colace or Senekot, if you so desire.

- ❑ **PRE-OPERATIVE MEDICATIONS**

**It is very important that you resume taking all of the medications that you were taking prior to your surgery, IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING YOUR SURGERY. Individuals who take a daily Aspirin for cardiac reasons and who were instructed to stop it for 7-10 days prior to their surgery should absolutely resume taking the Aspirin immediately after their surgery.**

**Patients who were prescribed PLAVIX usually need to hold from taking the medication for 10 days prior to surgery and may restart the medication 7-10 days after surgery.**

- ❑ **ICING YOUR SHOULDER**

Apply ice bags or use the cryocuff you were given to control swelling. Ice should be applied 20-30 minutes at a time, every one to two hours. To protect your skin put a thin towel or T-shirt next to your skin if using a plastic ice bag. Icing is most important in the first 48 hours, although many people find continuing it lessens their postoperative pain.

- ❑ **CALL THE OFFICE IMMEDIATELY** with any signs/symptoms of infection at the incision site(s) such as:

- Redness
- Swelling
- Warmth
- Drainage
  - It is not uncommon to have clear or red-tinged drainage the night of surgery after arthroscopy. This occurs as the fluid used to expand the joint during surgery slowly exits through the portal sites. This type of drainage does not require an emergent call.
- As well as if you experience any fever, chills, and/or pain that is not relieved by the pain medications.

❑ **If the office is closed or if you cannot reach anyone in the office** you should call (513) 354-3700 and ask to speak to the physician on call.

❑ **OTHER**

- Make sure that you have established supports prior to your surgery so that you will have people who can assist you during your recovery phase.
- Abstain from drinking alcoholic beverages and smoking.
- Drink plenty of water and eat a regular diet.
- Plan to take **AT LEAST** a few days to a week off from work.
- Your dressing will be removed at your first physical therapy visit. If your first visit is after 3 days, you may remove your dressing on post-operative day 3. If the incisions are not dry, please apply another dressing. If the incisions are dry, the dressing may remain off.
- You may shower immediately with your wound covered. You may shower with your wound uncovered at 5 days unless your wound is not dry. You should not submerge your wounds in water for 3-4 weeks. You should stay away from ponds, rivers, lakes, and hot tubs for 1 month.

❑ **PHYSICAL THERAPY**

- Following surgery, you will be prescribed a regimen of physical therapy.
- **You will begin physical therapy a few days after surgery. If you are going to a facility other than Beacon Orthopedics, please notify our office so that we can forward them the particular protocol for your surgery. Commonly used physical therapy protocols can also be found at [www.doctorrolf.com](http://www.doctorrolf.com). Dr. Rolf will provide you with specific physical therapy instructions on the day of your surgery or during your first post-operative visit (7-10 days after your surgery).**

Should you have any other questions regarding your post-operative instructions, feel free to contact us at (513) 354-7638.

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