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POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR PATIENTS HAVING ROTATOR CUFF REPAIR SURGERY

1. You should wear your sling at all times until Dr. Caldwell gives you permission to remove it. The sling needs to be worn while you are sleeping. The only time the sling should be removed is to do pendulum exercises. Pendulum exercises are performed by leaning forward at the waist and letting the arm fall forward toward the ground. The shoulder may then be moved in a circular fashion to your tolerance. Pendulum exercises should be done 3-4 times each day beginning the day following your surgery.
2. Please leave the bandages on your shoulder in place until _____. On _____ you may remove your bandages and take a shower. Do not remove the steri-strips over your incision sites. Apply only soap and water to your shoulder. After showering please dry your incision sites well. Do not put any lotions or ointments directly over your incision sites. Please cover your incision sites with band-aids.
3. If you have been fitted with a Polar Care ice unit please use this device continuously for the first 3-5 days following your surgery and then as needed thereafter. This device circulates cold water around your shoulder for pain relief and control of post-operative swelling. If you have not been fitted with a Polar Care ice unit, please ice your shoulder for 15-20 minutes 4-5 times each day for the first 4-5 days after surgery and then as needed thereafter. Do not apply Polar Care or ice directly to your skin.
4. If a Pain Buster has been placed in your shoulder it needs to be removed in our office on _____. This device slowly releases pain medications directly into your shoulder to help decrease post-operative pain. Please call our office to schedule an appointment. Our office phone number is #510-663-7700.
5. Following repair of the rotator cuff, the motions which should not be attempted during the first 6 weeks following your surgery are elevation of the arm away from your body and to the front of your body. These motions will be accomplished by your physical therapist in the first 2-6 weeks following your surgery. Dr. Caldwell will direct you to schedule physical therapy appointments approximately 2 weeks following your surgery. Only pendulum exercises are okay to do in the first 2 weeks following your surgery.
6. You may resume eating after your surgery. Initially begin eating foods such as toast, crackers and clear liquids. You may progress to your regular diet as tolerated.
7. Please call the office to schedule your first post-operative appointment. Our office phone number is #510-663-7700. Dr. Caldwell would like to see you on _____.
8. You have been provided with the medications to take post-operatively. Please take these medications as directed. If you have any questions please call our office for guidance.
9. If you have any questions, problems or concerns please call our office directly.