

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS
Arthroscopic Subacromial Decompression with or
without Distal Clavicle Excision
(removal of bone spur)

Dr. Sostak

visit www.healthy-txt.com/drsoastak for more detailed
instructions

PAIN: You will receive your pain medication prescription before you leave the surgery center. After the first day or two, as the pain lessens, you may decrease the frequency with which you take the medication. Remember, the medications are not necessarily meant to completely eliminate your pain, only to make it more bearable. Narcotic pain medications can cause constipation; you may wish to use an over-the-counter stool softener to help prevent this. Narcotic pain medications can cause constipation; I recommend using Senokot-S, an over-the-counter stool softener, 1 tab twice a day to help prevent this. You can increase to 2 tabs twice a day as needed. In addition Miralax or Milk of Magnesia can be used if no results with the Senokot-S

Use ice or a cold therapy unit constantly for the first 48 hours, then as frequently as needed.

DRESSINGS: You will have a soft dressing applied over your incisions. It is meant to absorb any leaking blood or fluid from the joint, and to protect from infection. Leakage immediately after surgery is normal and actually helps to drain some of the fluid that accumulates in the joint during surgery. The dressings may become moist or blood-stained; this is normal and usually not a cause for alarm.

BATHING: You may remove your dressing 48 hours after your surgery to take a shower. For showering, you may remove your entire sling and let your arm rest at your side. Under the surgical dressing, you may have steri-strips over your incisions (small white strips of tape). Please leave them in place until they fall off on their own or until they are removed at your first post-op appointment. You may let soap and water gently wash

over your incisions, but do not scrub them. Pat them dry with a towel, then recover each of the incisions with a band-aid if desired. You may not soak your shoulder in a bathtub or go into a pool or hot tub until incisions are well healed (usually takes a few weeks).

PHYSICAL THERAPY: Therapy typically starts 1 week after surgery. Most patients go to physical therapy 2-3x/week for about 6-8 weeks.

OFFICE VISIT: Your first post-op visit will be scheduled 7-10 days after surgery. At this visit, we'll check your incisions and answer any questions you may have.

WHEN TO CALL: Please call our office at (630) 584-1400 if you develop a fever greater than 101°F, increasing pain that is not responding to pain medication, redness around incisions or shoulder, increased swelling, persistent bleeding or drainage, or drainage other than clear fluid or blood. If it is after hours, the answering service will contact the physician assistant on call.

It is normal to develop bruising to the operative arm. Some people have bruising across the chest all the way down to the hand. It can also be normal to develop swelling to the arm and hand. Gravity tends to pull fluid down the arm- your body will be able to reabsorb this fluid but it may take a few weeks. If the swelling becomes increasingly painful and more tender to the touch, please let our office know.

AFTER SURGERY: You will be receiving a post-operative phone call from the surgical staff within a few days after surgery to check on you and assist you with any concerns.

DRIVING: You may drive once you have stopped the narcotic pain medication and can comfortably move your shoulder. You should not wear a sling while driving.

SLING: Because your surgery did not require a "repair," the sling is only for comfort. It may be removed whenever you are comfortable. Most patients wear the sling for 3 days. It does not need to be worn while sleeping.

RETURN TO WORK: This depends on the nature of your job. If you have a desk job or can work from home, you may be able to do computer/phone work within 1 week of surgery.

If you have a labor-intense job, or job that requires heavy lifting/ repetitive use of your shoulder, you may need to be off work for at least 1 month. We can give you work restriction notes at each post-operative visit if necessary.

MOST COMMON QUESTIONS SUBACROMIAL DECOMPRESSION

How should I be using my sling? Because your surgery did not require a “repair,” the sling is only for comfort. It may be removed whenever you are comfortable. Most patients wear the sling for 3 days. It does not need to be worn while sleeping. You should not wear a sling while driving.

What motions should I avoid? Because there was no “repair” done to your shoulder, you may move your shoulder as tolerated. Expect reaching overhead or across your body to cause pain immediately after surgery. Your motion will be progressed in physical therapy.

When can I drive? You may drive once you feel comfortable moving the shoulder without pain and you are not taking any narcotic pain medications. Most patients wait 1-2 weeks to drive.

How should I be sleeping? Please try to wear the sling while you are sleeping for at least a few nights, for comfort. Sometimes it is more comfortable to sleep upright (in a recliner chair) for a few days to weeks after surgery- this is optional.

What about pain medications? Take the narcotic medication regularly for at least the first few days after surgery. If you have having minimal pain and would like to switch to a milder medication, please take Tylenol/acetaminophen (extra strength or regular). Do not take Tylenol and norco together (this would be too much acetaminophen). Do not exceed more than 4000mg of Tylenol/acetaminophen in a 24 hour

period. You may also use antiinflammatories such as advil, motrin, aleve, or ibuprofen.

HOW CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT SHOULDER IMPINGEMENT?

Please visit AAOS site: <http://orthoinfo.aaos.org/topic.cfm?topic=a00032>

SPORTS SPECIFICS

SHOULDER SUBACROMIAL DECOMPRESSION

We know you are eager to return to your sports and hobbies. We want to guide you safely through that process. Please use the following as a guide

GOLF

1 week post op: Putting

1 month post op: If you have full and comfortable motion, you may take full swings with your irons and may progress to your driver as tolerated

BASKETBALL

1 month post-op: jogging & dribbling drills

2 months post-op: All activity as tolerated

SWIMMING

1 month post op: Once your incisions are well healed (usually 3-4 weeks) then you may get into a pool. Then you may progress swimming as tolerated

WEIGHT LIFTING

1 week post op: You may do lower body and core exercises as tolerated. Please follow the instructions of your physical therapist for upper body exercise. Once you are nearing the end of physical therapy (typically 3 months post-op), your therapist can create a safe “return-to-lifting” program. Physical Therapists and Athletic Trainers can outline a specific plan for you.

