

Arthroscopy of the Shoulder with Repair of the Rotator Cuff

After the procedure, surgery bandages will be in place on your shoulder along with a cold pad, and your arm will be resting in a sling

The arm sling goes around your neck with an area to support the arm; more complex slings contain a small pillow called an abduction pillow that is used to rest the arm away from your body and are secured around your waist; your Doctor/Surgeon will decide which is best for you.

Be sure to follow your Doctor/Surgeon's directions about the use of your sling; they are usually worn during the night to remind you not to move your arm "the wrong way"

For most of the shoulder procedures it is important to rest your arm/shoulder after surgery

You may remove the sling 3-to-4 times a day to perform range of motion exercises of the elbow, wrist and hand, but you **MUST** keep the arm close to your body as you move the arm to straighten out your elbow. "No Air in the Armpit" which means no reaching outward, no lifting your arm off to the side, no picking up of objects. The Physical Therapist at the surgery facility may instruct you concerning additional exercises.

Two days after surgery you may remove all of the surgery bandages; all white gauze bandages on your shoulder and the smaller bandages on the incision(s); you may see some dried drainage from your surgery incisions on the bandages, we expect a little drainage; throw all the bandages away, do not save them to reuse.

You may shower, but you do not get to use your surgery arm/shoulder to help you wash. Wipe lightly over the surgery incision with soap and water; it is a good idea to use a clean disposable washcloth each time you wash; towel dry the area; air dry the area and then you may apply band-aids to cover the incision

Do not apply any lotions or ointments over your incision, near the surgery area or anywhere on your surgery leg; your Doctor/Surgeon will tell you when you may lotion around this area

You may have a cooler type of ice machine prescribed for you after surgery, an ice sleeve, an ice pack, or simply a bag of ice cubes; any cold therapy is helpful to control pain and swelling of the surgery area

Icing is best used every 2 hours, for 20 minutes at a time

Ice packs may be used over the surgery bandage; the cold will penetrate the layers of bandages and help with pain management and with swelling of the surgery area.

Be careful to protect your skin from any of the cold therapy methods; immediately after surgery, the bandages will protect your skin; once the bandages are removed, you may continue to use the cold therapy, but you must protect your skin from the cold, for instance, with a small towel; skin which is unprotected from the cold therapy is at risk for frost bite.