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## Discharge Instructions after Shoulder Fracture Fixation

### General

- Use ice on the shoulder intermittently over the first 48 hours after surgery, then as needed.
- Caution: Narcotics are habit forming and have multiple side effects. Begin to taper your use as soon as you are able.

### Activity

- Wear sling at all times, removing it only to shower, dress/undress, or for any prescribed exercises. Do not drive while in your sling and/or on narcotic medications.
- When getting dressed/undressed, gently assist your elbow into a hanging position and lean over with your arm hanging down like a weight on a string if you need to access your armpit or slide on a shirt sleeve—do not raise your arm from your side against gravity.
- Move your fingers frequently to prevent swelling.
- Stay hydrated and walk frequently to avoid pneumonia, blood clots, and constipation.

### Over the counter medications

- To prevent constipation: Stool softener of choice. A prescription for Senokot has been provided, but use whatever keeps you regular (Miralax, Colace, Dulcolax or Senokot).
- For pain: Tylenol should be used (as long as you do not have liver disease) for pain.
- Blood thinner: Aspirin 325 mg daily for 4 weeks unless you are already on a different blood thinner (Coumadin, Xarelto, lovenox, etc.) starting the day after your surgery.

### Wound care

- You may remove your dressing after two days, leave any steri-strips/sutures/staples in place. They will fall off on their own.
- You may shower 5 days after surgery. The incision CANNOT get wet prior to 5 days. Simply allow the water to wash over the site and then pat dry. Do not rub the incision. Make sure your axilla (armpit) is completely dry after showering.
- Wait at least 1 month after your surgery to submerge yourself in a pool.
- Keep incision out of direct sunlight until the scars fade (months).
- If garments irritate incision, feel free to cover with a band-aid or gauze.

### Diet

- Stay hydrated
- High fiber diet with extra fresh fruits and vegetables

### Concerning Findings

If you have any problems:

- During business hours call the office: 312.432.2880
- After hours call and ask for the orthopaedic resident on call: 312.432.2880 ,option 0
- Concerning findings: Excessive redness of the incisions, Drainage for more than 4 days after surgery, Fever of more than 101.5° F

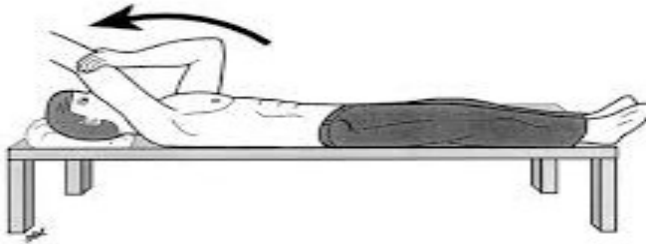
**You should see Dr. Garrigues or his PA 10-14 days after your surgery. If you do not have an appointment, please call 708-236-2701 to schedule**



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**Home Range of Motion Exercises**

- Perform passive, assisted forward flexion and external rotation (outward turning) exercises with the operative arm. You were taught these exercises prior to discharge. Both exercises should be done with the non-operative arm used as the "therapist arm" while the operative arm remains completely relaxed.
- 10 of each exercise should be done 5 times daily, work up to the max degrees



**Forward Flexion** Maximum: \_\_\_\_\_ deg. (if not specified, default is 140 °)

Lay flat on your back, completely relax your operative arm like a wet noodle, and grasp the wrist of the operative shoulder with your opposite hand. Using the power in your opposite arm, bring the stiff arm up only to the maximum indicated above (90 degrees indicates your arm pointed straight ahead). Start holding it for ten seconds and then work up to where you can hold it for a count of 30. Breathe slowly and deeply while the arm is moved. Repeat this stretch ten times. Repeat the entire cycle 5 times per day.



**External rotation** Maximum: \_\_\_\_\_ deg. (if not specified, default is 40 °)

External rotation is turning the arm out to the side while your elbow stays close to your body. It is best stretched while you are lying on your back. Hold a cane, yardstick, broom handle, or golf club in both hands. Bend both elbows to a right angle. With your operative arm completely relaxed, use steady, gentle force from your normal arm to rotate the hand of the stiff shoulder out away from your body. Continue the rotation only to the maximum indicated above (90 degrees indicates your arm pointed straight ahead). Holding it there for a count of 10. Repeat this exercise ten times. Repeat the entire cycle 5 times per day.