

POSTOPERATIVE INFORMATION

FRANK A. PETRIGLIANO, MD

CHIEF – DIVISION OF SPORTS MEDICINE
HEAD TEAM PHYSICIAN – LA KINGS
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY AND SPORTS MEDICINE
USC DEPARTMENT OF ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY
323.442.5822 OFFICE
323.865.5480 FAX



Keck Medicine
of USC

PATIENT STICKER

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS – SHOULDER REPLACEMENT

GENERAL INFORMATION:

1. A cold therapy device that may be applied postoperatively. This will help reduce the swelling and minimize the pain. You can use this 20-30 minutes at a time up to 4 times per day. Alternatively, you can use ice packs for 20 minutes at a time, 3-4 times per day for pain reduction.
2. Your arm will be in a sling following surgery. You will be in this sling for the next 4-6 weeks. This includes sleeping with it on as well. The most important factor about sling usage and position is comfort for you. Adjust the sling so that it is most comfortable to you. The pillow can be removed if needed. I will let you know the exact duration of sling usage at your follow-up visit. Feel free to remove the sling to eat, shower, and do your exercises. Please do not lift anything with the operative arm and do not drive until I have allowed you to do so.
3. We have provided some basic exercises in your discharge paperwork. These exercises should be done twice daily. The nursing staff will instruct you how to dress yourself and apply the sling. Avoid lifting objects with the arm.
4. You may be more comfortable sleeping in a semi-seated position the first few nights following surgery. Keep a pillow propped under the elbow and forearm for comfort. If you have a recliner type of chair it might be beneficial. If not, that is fine too, but it would be helpful to sleep propped up with pillows behind your operated shoulder as well under your elbow and forearm. This will reduce pulling on the suture lines.
5. Prescriptions for pain medication, anti-inflammatory, and anti-biotic will be prescribed for you. You should avoid taking pain medications on an empty stomach as it will make you nauseous. Please drink plenty of water or fluids as this will decrease the likelihood of constipation. You should take the anti-inflammatory (Naproxen) and antibiotic twice a day every day, until it is done. Only use the narcotic medication if you are in severe pain, as it will cause constipation.

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DISCHARGE UNTIL POST-OP VISIT:

1. Ice the shoulder as needed for pain relief as described above.
2. Please leave the occlusive dressing on your wound until your first post op visit.
3. You may shower after surgery but **do not** get the wound wet. Wrap your shoulder with plastic wrap and secure it with tape. Dr. Petrigliano will likely clear you to get the wound wet at the wound check visit 7-10 hours postoperatively.
4. You can remove your sling for short periods when you are sitting in a chair. However, your elbow must be supported by pillows. You must wear the sling if you are doing any activity, especially while you are in public places for the next 4-6 weeks.
5. Formal physical therapy will begin after 2-3 weeks. Your physical therapy prescription has been provided in your post-op paperwork, and my office can fax the order to your therapist as well if you like.
6. Do not drink alcoholic beverages or take illicit drugs when taking pain medications.
7. Return to work is determined on a case-by-case basis.
8. When dressing, put your operative arm in the sleeve first. When getting undressed, take your operative arm out last. Loose fitting, button-down shirts are recommended.
9. In most states it is against the law to drive while your arm is in a sling.
10. Your first postoperative appointment is 7-10 days post-surgery – please call my office to arrange this visit if it has not already been scheduled.