

RECOVERING AT HOME AFTER SHOULDER SURGERY

This information will help you care for yourself after your operation.

REST AND ACTIVITY

- Go home after leaving the hospital and rest for the day. Take it easy for the first few days.
- As you feel stronger, slowly increase your activity. Space your activities with rest periods.
- For the first 24 hours, do deep breathing and coughing exercises every 2 – 3 hours when you are awake. Take a deep breath in through your nose and blow out through your mouth. Repeat 3 times. On the third breath, cough 2 or 3 times.
- Your leg exercises are an important part of your recovery. Follow your Physiotherapist's instructions.

EATING AND DRINKING

- Drink plenty of fluids, 6 – 8 glasses of water each day.
- You may eat whatever you choose. It is a good idea to start slowly, eating small amounts until you know how food will feel in your stomach.
- You may feel nauseous or sick to your stomach. Avoid fatty, rich and spicy foods. Light foods such as toast, soup, crackers may feel better in your stomach. Try to keep drinking fluids.
- If your stomach is very upset or if you are vomiting ask your Pharmacist for medication to help.

DRESSING CHANGE

- Remove bulky dressing 72 hours after surgery and replace with a dry gauze dressing.
- Cover any scope sites with band-aids. Change daily as needed. Covering is no longer required once they have healed.
- Stitches (if you have any) will be removed at your next appointment with your surgeon.
- Do not apply lotions, creams or powders to your scope sites.
- Do not put a heating pad or hot water bottle on your scope sites.

SHOWERING AND BATHING

- You may shower 48 hours after your operation. Protect your scope sites with saran wrap and tape until they are dry and have healed.
- You may take a tub bath or swim 2 weeks after your operation if your scope sites have healed.

PAIN AND SWELLING

- For the first 24 hours after your operation, you may need to take your medication for pain regularly. Don't wait until the pain gets too bad before taking your medication. Remember most pills need 20 – 30 minutes to take effect.
- Try to take your medication at least 20 – 30 minutes before doing your exercises or a painful activity.
- As your pain decreased, take your medication less often.
- Your foot and leg may be 'puffy' or 'swollen' for 4 – 6 weeks after the operation. Elevating your foot/leg will help decrease swelling and discomfort. Put your foot/leg up on pillows when sitting or lying down. Place pillow length-wise under you leg you that your knee stays straight.
- Apply ice to your shoulder as instructed by your Physiotherapist.

FOLLOW-UP CARE

- A follow-up visit will be scheduled with your surgeon. At this visit, your surgeon will tell you what was found and check on how you are healing. You may find it helpful to write down any questions and bring them to your appointment.

CALL YOUR SURGEON IF YOU NOTICE ANY OF THESE SIGNS

- Bright red blood leaking through your bandage.
- Chills or fever of over 38.5°C (101.3°F) 48 hours after your surgery.
- White, yellow or green fluid from your scope sites. Any fluid with a foul odour.
- Red, hard, hot, swollen or painful areas around your scope sites or on your hip, knee or ankle.
- Vomiting that lasts longer than 4 hours.
- Pain that is not helped by medication.

Dr. Getgood 519-661-4003

Dr. Giffin 519-661-3454

Dr. Litchfield 519-661-4156

Dr. Willits 519-661-4121

If you need immediate medical attention, go to the
Emergency Department of the hospital closest to you.

If you are not able to reach your surgeon, Call London Health Sciences
Centre at **519-685-8500** and ask the operator to page the
orthopaedic resident on call at University Hospital.

The orthopaedic resident on call will not be available to answer
direct phone calls after 10:00pm.

***NO NARCOTIC PRESCRIPTIONS WILL BE RENEWED OVER THE PHONE**