

## **Gordon Groh MD, MBA Post Discharge Protocol**

### **AC (Acromioclavicular) Reconstruction Office: 828 252 7331**

#### **Pain**

- Over 90% of patients take narcotics for less than three weeks after surgery
- Take over the counter Tylenol 325 tablets
  - 2 tablets every 6 hours
- If prescribed Gabapentin—take every 8 hours as directed
- If prescribed an anti-inflammatory such as Celebrex—take daily as directed
- Take oxycodone as needed for pain—begin as block begins to wear off or prior to first night sleep

#### **Dressing Change**

- Leave initial dressing in place for five days—may remove and place Band-Aids.
  - Avoid any creams or ointments until the skin is healed

#### **Bathing**

- You may shower after the first dressing change five days after surgery—no tub bathing
- Do not get incision sites excessively wet

#### **Sling**

- Wear the sling full time except for bathing. If you have bicep cramping, you may remove the sling two or three times a day to stretch the elbow for two minutes.

#### **Driving**

- May contemplate driving if patient feels safe 2-3 weeks after surgery. Patient must be off all narcotic pain medications
- Patient must feel comfortable handling vehicle in emergency situations

#### **Physical Therapy**

- No therapy is indicated within the first two weeks as our initial emphasis is centered on wound healing. Greater than 95% of patients will complete their postoperative course without the need to see a physical therapist. Numerous studies have shown improved outcomes with physician directed home therapy (references at bottom of instructions).

## **Constipation**

- Take over the counter MiraLAX and Senna (over the counter) twice per day while using narcotic pain medications.
- Take Colace as directed (prescription) while taking narcotic pain medications.

## **Swelling & Edema management**

- Some swelling/edema is normal in the forearm/hand after shoulder surgery—although the amount can be variable
- Making a fist and squeezing a ball repeatedly during the day improves blood return and decreases swelling

## **Bruising/Discoloration in arm after Surgery**

- Normal after surgery and blood thinners including aspirin/anti-inflammatory medications may increase bruising

## **Staple/Suture Removal**

- Staples may be removed at the 14 days recheck if the wound appears to be healing with minimal swelling. Steri-strips are applied after staple removal and should stay in place until approximately 17 days after surgery.

## **Anti-Coagulation**

- Aspirin 325 mg per day or Xarelto/Coumadin for higher risk patients—typical duration four weeks—if indicated

## **CHG/Pre-operative Wash**

- All total shoulder patients will receive a CHG sponge and should wash with it the night prior to surgery

## **Dental Precautions**

- Delay elective dental procedures after surgery for 6 weeks
- Antibiotics are typically not initiated

#### References for Home Therapy:

Boardman ND, Cofield RH, Bengtson KA, Little R, Jones MC, Rowland CM. Rehabilitation after total shoulder arthroplasty. *J Arthroplasty*. 2001;16:483–486.

Brems JJ. Rehabilitation following total shoulder arthroplasty. *Clin Orthop Relat Res*. 1994;70–85

Effectiveness of formal physical therapy following total shoulder arthroplasty: A systematic review Peter K Edwards,<sup>1</sup> Jay R Ebert,<sup>1</sup> Chris Littlewood,<sup>2</sup> Tim Ackland,<sup>1</sup> and Allan Wang<sup>1,3</sup>, *Shoulder Elbow*. 2020 Apr; 12(2): 136–143. PMID: 32313563

Effect of supervised physiotherapy versus home exercise program in patients with subacromial impingement syndrome: A systematic review and meta-analysis Héctor Gutiérrez-Espinoza 1, Felipe Araya-Quintanilla 2, Christopher Cereceda-Muriel 3, Celia Álvarez-Bueno 4, Vicente Martínez-Vizcaíno 5, Iván Cavero-Redondo 6 *Comparative Study Phys Ther Sport*. 2020 Jan;41:34-42. doi: 10.1016/j.ptsp.2019.11.003. Epub 2019 Nov 6.

Effectiveness of supervised physiotherapy versus home exercise in subjects with rotator cuff disorders treated surgically: A systematic review and meta-analysis. Gutiérrez-Espinoza H, Araya-Quintanilla F, Olgúin-Huerta C, Valdés-Orrego I, Sepúlveda-Osses O. *Physiother Res Int*. 2022 Apr;27(2):e1942. doi: 10.1002/pri.1942. Epub 2022 Feb 20. PMID: 35184364