

Orthopaedic and Sports Injuries Services "OASIS"
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Rehab Protocol for Frozen Shoulder

Recovery Plan: Post surgical instructions

Day 1: The Day of Surgery

Maintain dressing, add 4x4 bandages if needed for drainage through dressing. Apply ice pack for 20 minute periods throughout the day. You will start exercises in the recovery room.

Remember: The key to keeping your motion is early movement!

Move your fingers and wrist often. Expect some swelling. If the color of your arm or hand changes, or sensation changes notify the physician. Start *pendulum* and *wall walk* (see list) exercises tonight.

** Most patients find sleeping semi-upright is more comfortable the first few days after shoulder surgery.

Post Op Day 1:

The same as day of surgery.

Exercise: You will begin simple exercises the day of surgery. They should be done every day for the first week post-op, to maintain blood flow and help to prevent blood clots once a day, in the shower, begin to flex and extend your elbow. (See list) Continue gripping exercises, and be sure to move your wrist and fingers frequently.

**Your arm sling is for comfort only, use it only as needed and when in a crowded place (this will warn people to avoid your injured area). Do your elbow, wrist, and hand exercises at least two other times each day – 15 Reps.

DAY 2 (48 hours post-operatively):

Continue same activities including using ice for 20 min. periods as needed. Take your dressing off. Shower today; supporting the affected arm with the opposite hand. You may wash under the arm, but do not use a large amount of soap. Too much soap may dry out the skin and cause a rash. Move the arm freely in the shower. Don't be afraid to do this, it will aid in your recovery. After your shower, dry the shoulder well and place Band-aids over incisions. Physical therapy usually begins today.

Physical Therapy:

Vital to your recovery of good shoulder function is a graduated activity and exercise program to increase muscle strength and motion.

Your physical therapy will begin 3-4 days after surgery. The physical therapist will guide you in your shoulder rehabilitation program.

It is very important for you to start therapy when recommended.

To avoid complications, postoperative follow up appointments with your physician are also required to monitor your progress.

DAY 4 – 10:

Change Band-aids daily or as needed. Maintain sling use for comfort. Continue with exercises as directed. Add *biceps curls* and increase the circle size when doing the *Pendulum* exercises. Ask your therapist for a home shoulder pulley set and start pulley exercises daily.

DAY 7 – 10:

Visit with the doctor. Further instructions will be given to continue your rehabilitation and recovery. Depending on what type of surgery you had and your own recovery rate, physical therapy will start 3 days after surgery.

General Instructions for Adhesive Capsulitis (Frozen Shoulder) Patients

You may resume a regular diet when you return home. Start with tea or broth and advance slowly with crackers or toast, then a non-spicy sandwich. If you become nauseated, return to clear liquids. You can also try Tums, Zantac or Pepcid to help settle your stomach.

After surgery you are encouraged to deep breathe and cough frequently (at least 3-4 times per day). This will reduce mucus from building up in your lungs, and will reduce the risk of developing pneumonia.

*****It is important to move arm and shoulder immediately after surgery to prevent refreezing*****

Pain Control:

Take medication as prescribed by Mr. M Shah. Moving the affected shoulder *immediately* after surgery is important to prevent “refreezing” of the joint. **If pain is *preventing* movement, please Contact Hospital.**

Blood Clots:

Patients at high risk for blood clots include:

- **Those with long car or train commutes;**
 - **May be overweight: BMI>30*;**
 - **Have a history of having cancer;**
 - **Females on birth control pills;**
 - **Males over the age of 40.**
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- *These patients should be taking 1 aspirin per day for 6 weeks after surgery unless allergic to aspirin.*

Sling:

Patients are to wear the sling as needed for comfort. It is recommended that patients wear the sling when going out. This will help to alert others to avoid the affected arm during this healing period. Move fingers and wrist often. Expect some swelling.

Dressing:

The dressing is to remain clean and dry. After 48 hours you may remove the dressing but keep the small steri strips on. You may shower today and replace the dressing with Band-Aids.

Driving:

Patient cannot drive until they are off all pain medications, completely out of the sling, and can easily place hands at 12:00 position on the steering wheel and can move hands freely from the 9:00 – 3:00 position.

Returning to Work:

Patients with sedentary or low demand work can usually return to work within 7-10 days. They will still have restrictions on lifting (less than 5 pounds) repetitive and overhead use on the surgical side.

Medium work that requires some light lifting will need at least 3-4 weeks.

Patients with slightly higher demand jobs or infrequent repetitive arm use will need at least 6-8 weeks.

Heavy laborers (patients with repetitive work, overhead work of any kind, such as manufacturing or construction work) may need a minimum of 3-4 months and possibly a work conditioning program prior to returning to work.

Airline Flights:

Patients may fly 2-3 weeks after surgery on short flights (up to 2 hours) but should wait 6-8 weeks for longer flights.

You should get up and walk frequently to avoid blood clots and take an aspirin (unless allergic).

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