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THE HOSPITAL FOR SPECIAL SURGERY  
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## **POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR ROTATOR CUFF REPAIR**

PAIN CONTROL: Take pain medication as directed.

ACTIVITY: Rest the day of surgery. You may place a pillow under your forearm for comfort. It may be easier to sleep sitting up for the first few days.

SLING: Your shoulder will be placed in a sling in the operating room. You must wear the sling at all times (including sleeping) for 6 weeks.

CRYOCUFF: The cryocuff or ice wrap will be placed on your shoulder in the recovery room. Leave it on as much as possible for the first 3 days. After 3 days, use it for a minimum of 4 times a day for 30 minutes. The more you use it, the less swelling and inflammation you will have. The cryocuff can be removed when not in use.

BANDAGES: You may remove the outer dressing and gauze pads after 48 hours. You may cover the sutures loosely with a Band-Aid. Keep your sutures clean and dry. If you wish to shower, use a plastic bag or saran wrap to keep your shoulder dry. Your sutures will be removed approximately 7-10 days after surgery. Please call the office to schedule this appointment.

PHYSICAL THERAPY: Please contact the office to arrange physical therapy start-date.

DRIVING: No driving is allowed while you are wearing the sling.

RETURNING TO WORK OR SCHOOL: You may return to work (sedentary) or school 7-10 days after surgery if pain is tolerable. Returning to heavy labor will be determined by Dr. Allen.

### **NORMAL SENSATIONS AND FINDINGS AFTER SURGERY:**

- a. Shoulder pain
- b. Shoulder warmth up to 3 weeks
- c. Small amount of bloody drainage
- d. Numbness to incision area
- e. Bruising
- f. Swelling of the hand. If this happens, open and close your fingers to help pump the blood.
- g. Low-grade temperature less than 101.5 degrees – if this occurs, drink plenty of fluids and cough and deep breathe (take 10 breaths, on the last hold for a second then forcefully cough a few times). A low-grade temperature is normal for a week after surgery.
- h. Small amount of redness to the area where the sutures insert the skin.

### **NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IMMEDIATELY IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SIGNS OR SYMPTOMS OCCUR:**

- a. Change is noted to your incision (i.e. increased redness or drainage)
- b. Temperature greater than 101.5 degrees
- c. Fever, chill, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- d. Sutures become loose or fall out and incision becomes open
- e. Drainage becomes yellow, pus-like, or foul-smelling
- f. Increased pain unrelieved by medication or measures mentioned above