



PRE OPERATIVE INFORMATION SHEET

This is a reminder of the important things to remember regarding your shoulder surgery.

Immediately post surgery:

1. Once your block starts to wear off, call the nursing staff and start taking prescribed pain-killers. It is very important that you get on top of your pain early.
2. If you cannot get your pain under control, ask the nursing staff to contact your anaesthetist on the ward to assist.
3. If you are prone to constipation it may be worthwhile taking MOVICOLE to soften your bowels.
4. Sleeping upright at a 45-60° incline, with a pillow behind your operated arm, is often the most pain-free position to sleep.
5. Your sling can be removed once the block has worn off for select patients. Discuss this point with your physiotherapist.

Sling use:

1. You may take your sling off intermittently around the house, if you are more comfortable without it. Listen to your shoulder, it will tell you how often to use it around the house.
2. Practice putting on and removing your sling before surgery to become familiar with it.
3. It is often more comfortable to have your wrist slightly higher than your elbow with wrist supported.
4. Do not use the thumb support inside the sling.
5. It is sometimes pain relieving to shrug and then relax your shoulder blade (don't drop it) in the sling to relieve the muscles around your neck and shoulder girdle.

Precautions:

1. **Don't** lift your arm against gravity, under any circumstances, until your physiotherapist or surgeon allows.
2. Make sure that you **never** force movement or perform painful activities!
3. **NEVER** use your operated arm to assist you get into or out of bed, including moving up and down the bed as you could re-rupture your rotator cuff tendon.
4. Falling onto an outstretched arm or falling onto your operated shoulder will most likely result in rotator cuff re-rupture.

Helpful hints and exercises:

1. Don't do anything that hurts!
2. Exercises are a bonus, not a necessity.

3. Your primary exercise is to lean well forwards (to eliminate gravity) and perform gentle cradled circular movements, 5 times in each direction, 3-4 times per day, only **in a pain free manner**
4. Exercising early and more often does **NOT** prevent a frozen shoulder and is a gross misconception.
5. Also bend your forearm up and down intermittently, without weight in your hand, keeping your arm by your side. Direct your hand towards your sternum when you move your elbow.

Sleeping:

Sleeping is often the biggest challenge post surgery. Individual sleeping postures vary greatly. The following is recommended:

1. Try sleeping in an upright/inclined position either in a recliner or trial using a beanbag in bed. Alternatively you can prop yourself up in bed and use a pillow running length-wise behind your arm.
2. If the above is not suitable for you, trial sleeping on your non-operated side and rest your operated side on a pillow. We encourage you to avoid sleeping on your operated tendon side for approximately **three months**.
3. Trial different postures until you find a comfortable position.
4. **Sleep with your sling on**, unless otherwise informed.

Driving:

It is probably best to discuss when to drive with Graham or Simon or your surgeon. If you are to drive the following is recommended:

1. Don't use your operated arm to drive for at least six weeks.
2. Don't use your sling when driving and let your arm rest on your lap, possibly on a pillow.
3. Only drive if you have an automatic car and power steering.

Good luck. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us for further guidance on 9312 3155.