

ORTHO SPORTS



Dr Matthew Brick

Dr Warren Leigh

DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS SHOULDER ARTHROSCOPY

Recovery after shoulder arthroscopy involves controlling swelling and discomfort, return of range-of-motion of the shoulder joint, regaining strength in the muscles around the shoulder joint, and a gradual return to activities. The following instructions are intended as a guide to help you achieve these individual goals and recover as quickly as possible after your arthroscopic shoulder surgery.

A. COMFORT:

Although arthroscopy uses only a few tiny incisions around the shoulder joint, swelling and discomfort can be present. To minimize discomfort, please do the following:

1. **Ice** – Ice controls swelling and discomfort by slowing down the circulation in your shoulder. Place crushed ice in a plastic bag, then wrap the bag with a small towel to protect your skin. Place the ice over your shoulder for no more than 10 minutes, 3 times a day.
2. **Pain Medication** – If your anaesthetist has prescribed a pain medication for you, take it as prescribed, but only as often as necessary. If no pain medication has been prescribed, Paracetamol can be used. **Avoid alcohol if you are taking strong pain medication.**
3. **Sling** – A sling has been provided for your comfort. Use the sling only as long as it is necessary and then discard it unless otherwise advised by your doctor.
4. **Motion** – *Gently* regaining motion in your shoulder and arm can decrease pain and hasten your recovery.

B. ACTIVITIES:

1. **Range-of-Motion** – Move your shoulder through a *comfortable* range of motion to prevent stiffness. Use your good arm to assist the operated arm. We NEVER ask you to deliberately endure pain, with either home exercises or with your physio. Pain is always a signal to STOP.
2. **Daily Activities** – Use your shoulder and arm in activities of daily living as your level of comfort permits.

3. **Athletic Activities** – Athletic activities, such as swimming, bicycling, jogging, running and stop-and-go sports, should be **avoided** until allowed by your doctor after your first follow-up visit.
4. **Return to Work** – Return to work as soon as you are able. Your ability to work depends on a number of factors – your level of discomfort and how much demand your job puts on your shoulder and arm. If you have any questions, please call your doctor. Typically patients with desk jobs can return at 7-10 days.

C. WOUND CARE:

1. Keep the dressing clean and dry for at least the first 3 days after surgery.
2. Often the waterproof dressings can be left in place until your first post op visit. You will be given spares. If your dressing is soaked with blood or fluid, get a helper to wash their hands, peel the old one off and carefully replace it with a new one.
3. You may shower immediately after surgery providing your waterproof dressings are in place
4. Bathing, swimming and soaking should be avoided until allowed by your doctor after your first follow-up visit.

D. EATING:

1. Your first few meals, after arthroscopy, should include light, easily digestible foods and plenty of liquids, since some people experience slight nausea as a temporary reaction to anesthesia.

E. CALL DR BRICK'S OFFICE IF:

1. Pain in your shoulder persists or worsens in the first few days after surgery.
2. Excessive redness or drainage of cloudy or bloody material presents itself around the arthroscopy incisions.
3. You have a temperature elevation greater than 37.5° with no apparent cause.
4. You have pain, swelling or redness in your arm or hand.
5. You notice numbness or weakness in your arm or hand.

F. RETURN DR BRICK'S OFFICE AT MILLENNIUM:

1. Your first return to our office should be within the first 1-2 weeks after your surgery. The appointment time is included in the pre-operative pack that was posted to you. If you need to change the time, call Andrea (Dr Brick) or Shannon (Dr Leigh) on 477 2080 at the Millennium office.