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POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS – HUMERAL SHAFT ORIF

SLING/MOVEMENT

For the first 6 weeks after surgery, you will wear the sling out of the house. You may only remove the sling to shower and to perform range of motion exercises for arm as instructed. After the first two weeks, we may consider sleeping with the arm out of the sling straight on pillows and with the arm elevated.

You should move the elbow, wrist, and hand as well as your neck as tolerated. Shoulder shrugs and scapular retraction are encouraged as well.

ICE

Using ice will help decrease swelling and pain after your surgery. Regular large ice packs should be used for intervals of 15 minutes every 2-3 hours.

MEDICATIONS

Nearly all patients will receive a nerve block for anesthesia, it will wear off over 18-24 hours. During this time, you will have little to no feeling in the body part where you had surgery (i.e. the arm). To control your pain during this transition while the nerve block is wearing off, you are to eat first and then begin taking the **pain medication** (Percocet, Norco). The pain medication can be taken 1-2 pills every 4-6 hours. Pain medication can cause constipation, you may take miralax once a day over the counter. You may also take Colace 100mg 1-2x/day. You can supplement your pain medication with an anti-inflammatory (e.g. Naproxen, Advil, Aleve, etc.) – this will help you wean from the narcotic pain medication.

A **sleeping medication** (e.g. Ambien or Benadryl) is also provided to help you sleep at night. Take one tablet 15-30 minutes before you plan to sleep.

You have been given an anti-nausea medication (Zofran), please take for nausea or vomiting.

DRESSING/BANDAGES

Keep your surgical dressing clean and dry. Leave the dressing in place until your 1st post op visit.

TEMPERATURE

It is normal to have an elevated temperature during the first 2-3 days post-operatively. Please call our office if your temperature is above 101°F, if there is increased redness around the incision sites, or if there is increased drainage from the incisions.

APPOINTMENT

It is likely that our practice coordinator has already scheduled a post-operative visit for you. This should occur 7-10 days after surgery. At that visit your sutures will be removed, and you will be given a prescription for physical therapy. If you need anything, the easiest way to us is to call 818-703-3333 or utilize the “Contact Us” tab on laorthos.com.