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POSTOP INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING ROTATOR CUFF REPAIR

These postoperative instructions are for patients who have undergone arthroscopic shoulder decompression followed by a rotator cuff repair. This includes those patients with both small and large tears of the rotator cuff. Those patients wearing an abduction pillow under their arm to keep the arm elevated have undergone a repair of a large or massive rotator cuff tear. Those patients that are in an ultrasling (gray sling with a small pillow) have undergone a repair of a small to medium sized rotator cuff tear.

1. After discharge, you may change the dressings daily if desired. After removing the old dressings, replace them with some 4 x 4 gauze pads and secure with tape. You may shower 2 days after surgery. Let clear water run over the incisions, do not scrub them. No baths or soaking the incision for prolonged periods of time until 10 days after surgery.
2. If you are wearing an abduction pillow, you have undergone a repair for a large to massive rotator cuff tear. Your postop exercises consist of doing gentle rotations of the arm using the opposite hand to produce the motion. You may bend and extend your elbow whenever desired by undoing the Velcro strap around the wrist. The abduction pillow will rotate and slip on occasion. Feel free to adjust the brace as needed to make it more comfortable. The purpose of this brace is to keep the arm out to the side of the body, relieving tension on the rotator cuff repair.

If you are wearing an ultrasling (grey sling with a small pillow), you have undergone a repair for a small to medium rotator cuff tear. Your postop exercises will consist of removing the sling to allow for flexion and extension of the elbow as well as pendulums (bending at the waist and doing gentle circles with your arm dangling down). You should not attempt to elevate the arm under its own muscle power. The arm should only be elevated with the assistance of your other arm or while doing gentle circles.

3. Strong oral pain medication will be prescribed for you. Attempt to use this sparingly, supplementing this with aspirin, Tylenol, or ibuprofen products. If additional pain medication is needed, please call the office during regular business hours, Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
4. If you have an abduction pillow, please wear at all times. If you have an ultrasling, please also wear at all times, removing only while doing exercises and for shower.
5. Please make sure that an appointment has been scheduled for you to be seen in clinic in 1-2 weeks following surgery.
6. Call the office if you notice any unusual side effects such as a prolonged high fever, increased pain, or foul smelling discharge from the wound.
7. Also see Dr. Padilla's physical therapy prescription.