

Total Shoulder Replacement Post Operative Instructions

Brad Carofino M.D.

Shoulder, Elbow, Hand Surgery
Atlantic Orthopaedic Specialists

Please contact with questions
carofinob@atlanticortho.com

Secretary: Katrina Riddick
757-321-3300

What operation did I have?

You had a total shoulder replacement. In this operation the ball and socket of the shoulder joint are replaced with an artificial joint made of metal (titanium) and plastic.

When can I change my bandages?

You may remove your bandages after three days. At that time you may begin showering. Do not soak the incision or scrub at it. After each shower, you should pat dry the incision and apply a new bandage.

What medications should I be taking?

We will prescribe a pain medication for after surgery. You should take this as needed.

We will also provide a prescription for Zofran a nausea medication. You should only take this if needed, and may want to wait to fill the prescription since many patients never use it.

Finally, you will be given a prescription for Colace a stool softener to prevent constipation. You should take this as long as you are taking pain medication.

Should I ice my shoulder?

Icing the shoulder for the first two days after surgery will help decrease pain and swelling. I recommend that you ice as much as possible. However, after two hours on the ice should be removed for thirty minutes. After two days you may continue to ice the shoulder if you find it helpful.

What can I do with my arm and hand?

You may move your hand, wrist and elbow as much as you like with the sling on. You can use your hand for activity but should not lift anything heavier than a coffee cup. You should not move your shoulder.

Can I move my shoulder?

You should continue to stretch your shoulder as we did in the hospital. You should do your stretches at least three times per day. Remember to do these laying flat on your back and using your other hand to move the shoulder.

You should not try to move the shoulder under its own power.

Can I remove the sling?

You may remove the sling for showering, and should put it back on after.

When should I have a return appointment?

You should return to see Dr. Carofino in 12-14 days to have your stitches removed. Please call Katrina Riddick to schedule this appointment. 757-321-3300.

Can I drive?

It is your responsibility to determine if you can safely drive. You cannot drive while you are taking narcotics. Most patients that have this operation are not able to drive for several weeks.

When will physical therapy begin?

Physical therapy will begin as soon as you leave the hospital. Please contact Katrina Riddick immediately so that we can set up your therapy appointments.

If you develop signs of an infection such as fevers, increasing pain, redness at your incision site, pus drainage from incision you should notify our office immediately, or go the emergency department.