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## **Shoulder Scope FAQ's** (*Frequently Asked Questions*) *after Shoulder Arthroscopy*

**Can I take a shower?** At 48 hours from surgery, you may remove the dressings and take a shower. The shoulder may get wet. **DO NOT REMOVE THE BUTTERFLY TAPES (IF PRESENT) UNTIL 14 DAYS AFTER SURGERY.** No immersion in water is allowed for 14 days post op. This means – No soaking in a bathtub, hot tub whirlpool or swimming in the ocean/pool.

**Can I Drive?** You are not permitted to drive while you are taking the narcotic pain medication. We do not recommend that drive while the sling is required. Once you've been instructed that the sling is no longer required, you must wait until you have adequate strength and range of motion to drive. We recommend you test your driving ability in an empty parking lot with supervision until you determine whether or not you can drive safely.

**When do I start Therapy?** Therapy should begin after your first post operative visit. You should call for an appointment immediately after your first post operative visit. Therapy can be done anywhere that is convenient and paid for by your insurance. A list of facilities is available.

**Do I need the sling?** In most cases the sling is for your comfort. **HOWEVER**, there are some procedures where the use of a sling is required. This should be noted on the instructions you receive when you are discharged from the hospital. Any questions – please ask one of our staff.

**Do I need pain medication?** Most patients use narcotic pain medicine for several days following surgery. Most patients change over to Tylenol or Advil during the daytime after a week or so. It is not unusual to require pain medicine at night for several weeks. Some patients require pain medication for longer periods of time. Use of ice may reduce the need for medication. We recommend you ice for no more than 20 minutes, with at least one hour between applications.

**I can't sleep because my arm hurts!** The pain is usually worse at night and sleeping is often difficult. It is difficult to find a comfortable position in bed and many people sleep in a recliner for several days. It helps to take pain medication an hour before bedtime.

**What things CAN I do?** Common sense is the rule. In many cases, you cannot damage the shoulder by doing too much, however, you **CAN** make it hurt. If you do something that makes it hurt, don't panic. You probably overdid it a little. Use ice and rest.

**What things should I NEVER do?** If there are specific restrictions based on your specific procedure, these will be given to you at the time of your appointment. In general, avoid things that make your shoulder hurt. Please remember that there is some discomfort involved with therapy.

**My shoulder hurts! I thought I'd be better by now!** Most people's expectations following an arthroscopy are that they will be back to normal within a few days. This is not what most people experience. Although some people feel much better right away, many people notice they are not back to normal for 4 weeks or more. The shoulder is stiff and sore for several weeks. Even though there are only a few tiny incisions, the actual surgery that was done inside the shoulder is the same as if the surgery was done through one large incision. Accordingly, you can expect some discomfort. Don't judge the effectiveness of the surgery until you have given ample time to recover from the surgery.

**When will my appointments be?** Routine post op appointments occur at 7-14 days after surgery and then at 4 - 6 weeks after surgery.