**Post Operative Information:**

***Shoulder Surgery***

**General Information:**

**Medications:**

* *Pain Medicine:*
  + Take only as needed
  + Do not drink alcoholic beverages
  + Do not drive after taking these medicines
  + Do not take any additional Tylenol with these medications
* *Aspirin:*
  + This is a mild blood thinner that will help prevent the formation of blood clots.
  + If you are already taking blood thinners (Coumadin, Warfarin), it is not necessary to take the aspirin.
* *Activity:*

**Shoulder Restrictions**

* + It is important that you obey your restrictions on activity. This is important for healing!
  + In general, approximate times for healing are listed below:
    - Shoulder Arthroscopy, removal of bone spur, removal of scar tissue 3-6 weeks
    - AC Joint Excision 3-6 weeks
    - Biceps Tendon Stabilization 4-8 weeks
    - Rotator Cuff Repair 12-24 weeks
    - Labral Repair 12-24 weeks
    - AC Joint Stabilization 12-24 weeks
    - Shoulder Replacement 8-12 weeks
  + Wear your sling as instructed. This will protect the shoulder from injury. It will also let others know that your shoulder is healing.

**REMEMBER… Biology is Biology. No matter how fit or healthy you are, it takes a certain amount of time for you to heal regardless of how good you feel.**

* *Physical Therapy:*
  + Physical therapy may be necessary to achieve the best result possible after surgery.
  + If you are not scheduled for physical therapy before your follow-up appointment, it is important to perform exercises as instructed by the physical therapist at least twice per day.
  + Stiffness is common after shoulder surgery and may be helpful to ice the shoulder 30 minutes before PT.

**\*\*\*\*\*Do not take narcotic Medicines if you plan to drive to therapy.\*\*\*\*\***

* *Dressing/Wound:*
  + Tenderness around the wound or site of injury is normal. However, increasing redness, discharge (such as pus or blood), or swelling that does not seem to be improving may indicate a problem.
  + After the wound heals (after 2 weeks), you may notice some suture (like fishing line) protruding from the skin. These may be removed using clean scissors (sterilized with rubbing alcohol or hydrogen peroxide) to cut the suture at the level of the skin.
  + After the wound heals, Vitamin E on the scar may help it decrease in size and become normal color.

**Postoperative Information**

* *Week 1:* 
  + Until you are seen at your first follow up appointment:
    - Keep the dressing on.
    - Take pain medicine as needed.
    - ***Do not get the dressing wet. This may increase the risk of infection!***
    - Some blood-tinged drainage on your dressing or bruising tracking down the arm is normal.
    - Use the Cryo-cuff or sling
    - Ice the Shoulder 4-5 Times per day using the Cryo-cuff or an ice pack.
    - Perform physical therapy exercises. If Instructed to do so.
    - Move your elbow, wrist, and hand as much as possible, but **DO NOT MOVE THE SHOULDER** except for exercises unless otherwise advised.
* *Week 2:* 
  + You may shower. Do not scrub or soak the wounds. No Bath tubs or swimming pools for 3 weeks after surgery.
  + If the strips of tape have not fallen off by two weeks after surgery, they may be removed.
  + Swelling and/or Bruising of the shoulder and arm for 2-3 weeks after surgery is normal.
  + Use of the cryo-cuff or sling.
  + Ice the shoulder 4-5 times per day using the cryo-cuff or an ice pack.
  + Perform physical therapy exercises. If Instructed to do so.
* *Week 3 and beyond:*
  + Continue Physical Therapy.
  + Avoid Hot Tubs /Jacuzzis for 4 weeks after surgery.
  + ***Remember….*** This is not a “No pain, no gain” situation. Rest is a key element to recovery. If your shoulder begins to hurt, take it easy… Don’t overdo it!

***You should call your Surgeon for any of the following:***

* + Fever of 101° or higher.
  + Pain that is not relieved by the medications prescribed by your doctor.
  + Redness, warmth and firmness around the incision or further up the extremity.
  + Bleeding or continuous oozing that saturates the bandage and does not stop after elevating the extremity or applying pressure to the incision for 10 minutes. Some blood-tinged drainage on the dressing is normal after arthroscopy.
  + Swelling of the fingers or tightness of bandage not relieved with elevation of the limb above the level of your heart.
  + Numbness, tingling or weakness in the fingers.
  + Pale, blue or cold fingers.
  + Severe pain with passive motion of the fingers.