

## **AC Joint Reconstruction Surgery**

### **Plan for Care and Recovery After Your Surgery**

Your health and safety are the number one focus of our entire care team. In the hospital or at the surgery center, we have many people working to help you have a successful surgery. When you return home, the responsibility for your recovery and care rests on you and your support system (such as family or friends). We want you to feel ready for a smooth transition from the hospital or surgery center to your home.

Our main goal is to make these instructions clear to help you in your recovery. We want you to have the best outcome possible. Please let us know if you have any questions.

#### **Living Arrangements**

For the first night after you leave the hospital and possibly longer, a **friend or family** member should stay with you to help monitor your recovery, to assure that your medication is used as directed, and to let us know if there are any problems. If that type of help is not available, please let us know.

#### **General Physical Activity**

It is important for you to progressively resume your normal level of physical activity as soon as possible after surgery – walking with another person is often the safest way to start.

#### **Pain Medications**

- Our goal is to treat your pain with multiple medicines and treatments (e.g., the sling and ice pack) in the safest way possible. This is called “multi-modal” pain control.
- Apply an **ice pack** to the shoulder on the site of surgery. Wrap the ice pack in a towel before placing on the shoulder to protect the skin. Apply for 30 minutes and then take a ten-minute break. Repeat 5 times per day minimum for the first 3 days.
- You will be given an adequate supply of pain medicines to manage the pain we expect after your procedure. It is important that these be taken only as prescribed, to keep you safe and avoid complications.
- **If you do not need the pain medication or can manage with a lesser dose, that is encouraged.** Please call our office at 321-842-0060 if you have questions about the medicines.
- If you think that you will need a refill of medications, please call at least 2 days before you run out of medicines.
- If your pain worsens significantly, please call our office at 321-842-0060.

**Disclaimer:** These instructions are for education purposes only to highlight the types of post surgical instructions that are given out by Dr. Service on a case by case basis.

### **Other medications**

If you were taking medicines at home before surgery, please talk with us about when they can be safely restarted.

### **Therapy/exercises**

Successful recovery from your shoulder surgery depends in large part on your work in the exercise program prescribed for you. If you have any questions—please let us know.

#### **Restrictions:**

- **Wear the sling and brace as much as possible for the first 6 weeks to protect the repair.**
- **No Active elevation (raising overhead) of your surgically treated arm to protect the repair.**
- **Move the elbow, wrist, and hand as pain allows. You should be doing gentle movements only.**
- **You can lift 1 pound or less with the affected arm for eating, drinking, and phone use with your elbow at your side. No heavy lifting or the repair can fail.**

#### **Exercises**

- **Do gentle passive movements with the arm as directed by the physical therapist: Pendulum exercises / Modified Codman's exercises 5 times per day.**
- **You can begin gentle passive movements of the shoulder to avoid stiffness.**
- **Move the surgically treated elbow, wrist, and hand to help decrease swelling. You should be doing gentle movements only.**
- **Walk and be active. No sports or strenuous activity until cleared in the office.**
- **You can do stationary bike, core strengthening and leg strengthening while recovering.**

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**BEN SERVICE, M.D.**  
BOARD CERTIFIED ORTHOPEDIC SURGEON  
Shoulder and Elbow Specialist

If you have a problem or question, please let us know sooner rather than later.  
We want you to have the best outcome possible.

**If you have an emergency: Call 911.**

- For problems during business hours that are not emergencies, please call our office at the Spring Lake Medical Pavilion at 321-842-0060. Ask to speak to a nurse or a physician's assistant from the shoulder and elbow team with Dr. Service.
- After business hours, call the paging operator at 321-842-0060 and ask to speak to the provider covering for Dr. Service's team.

Best wishes for a great recovery,

Benjamin Service, MD

Andre Daley, PA-C

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