

ROTATOR CUFF REPAIR PRE-OPERATIVE HANDBOOK



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THE GEORGE WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY **HOSPITAL**

WELCOME

We would like to thank you for choosing to have your surgery at The George Washington University Hospital. We are excited to be your partner in this journey. Preparation, education, and planning are the keystones to a safe and successful surgery. This booklet is intended to provide you with information that will help you along the process. It can be helpful to share this with your support system, a family member or good friend, who will be helping you through the process. Please reference back to it often during recovery, as it covers a comprehensive set of topics.

THE FOLLOWING TOPICS WILL BE INCLUDED:

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Once again, thank you for trusting your care to The George Washington University Hospital.

GENERAL TIMELINE EXPECTATIONS

SURGERY PREPARATION

On the day of the scheduled surgery, please arrive at the hospital promptly at the time you have been instructed. This is approximately two hours before your scheduled surgery time. We will need this time to prepare you for the procedure.

Please do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before your surgery date. This includes gum, mint, water, etc. If you have any questions regarding specific medications, please contact your primary care or prescribing doctor.

- 1 Book surgery
- 2 Schedule pre-operative rehab session (GW scheduling team will reach out)
- 3 Schedule pre-operative rehab session (ideally done 7-14 days before surgery)
- 4 Date: _____
First post-op visit
- 5 Regularly attend rehab
2-3x a week



TIMELINE FOR REHAB

SMALL TEAR REPAIRS



1ST PROTECTION

- Post op day 0-6 weeks
- Sling 24/7
- Pendulums
- Moving your elbow, wrist and hand



2ND PASSIVE MOTION

- Post op day 14 - week 4
- Continue to wear the sling
- Begin rehab focusing on passive motion
- Limiting external rotation



3RD ACTIVE MOTION

- Post op week 4-12
- Wean off the sling
- Begin to use the hand for daily activities
- Advance to active and active-assist range of motion



4TH STRENGTHENING

- Post op week 12
- Can begin strengthening
- No longer limited in external rotation
- Return to prior level of function

LARGE TEAR REPAIRS



1ST PROTECTION

- Post op day 0-6 weeks
- Sling 24/7
- Pendulums
- Moving your elbow, wrist and hand



2ND PASSIVE MOTION

- Post op 4-6 weeks
- Continue to wear the sling
- Begin rehab focusing on passive motion
- Limiting external rotation



3RD ACTIVE MOTION

- Post op week 6-12 weeks
- Wean off the sling
- Begin to use the hand for daily activities
- Advance to active and active-assist range of motion



4TH STRENGTHENING

- Post op 12 weeks
- Can begin strengthening
- No longer limited in external rotation
- Return to prior level of function

POST-OPERATIVE DRESSING AND SLING INFORMATION

DRESSINGS

- Your incision is covered by an Aquacell dressing.
- You may remove your dressings 3 days after surgery.
- Do not shower until the dressings are removed. Once the dressings are removed, you may shower. Do not scrub your incision; rather, just let water run over the incision.
- The sutures are under the skin and absorbable, so there are no stitches that need to be removed. The incision was further sealed with a skin glue, which is purple. This will eventually peel off on its own; do not pick at the incision.

CORFLEX ABDUCTION PILLOW SLING

- You will be in a sling for 4-6 weeks depending on surgeon preference.
- You may come out of your sling to shower. When doing so, use your other hand to support the operative arm and keep across your belly.
- You may also come out of your sling to do pendulum exercises. These are done by bending 90 degrees at the waist, letting your arm dangle with the assistance of gravity, and slowly moving your arm in gentle circles. Do this in both clockwise and counterclockwise directions. Do this a few times a day.
- When sitting on the couch or a chair, you may remove your sling to work on moving your elbow, wrist and hand. This will help prevent stiffness. It will be important to prop your arm on a pillow for support when doing these movements.



Application Instructions

- Unclip shoulder strap and open Velcro tabs on front panel.
- Position elbow in the sling as far back as possible.
- Can place thumb into inside loop to help keep arm in place
- Place shoulder strap over the opposite shoulder and clip into place. Reattach Velcro tabs on front panel
- Place pillow at the waistline of the affected side.
- Buckle the waist strap to the pillow.
- Make sure the arm is in a comfortable supported position, as pictured above.

Tips

- Normally the sling will be most comfortable when the pillow is positioned right above the hip bone, sitting at approximately a 45 degree angle.
- Once positioned correctly, use the buckle system to remove the sling. This will avoid re-adjusting each time.
- Use your non affected arm to help support your affect arm when removing the sling.
- It is helpful to roll up a small towel and place under armpit to maintain space when sling is removed.
- Position the pad on the shoulder strap around the back of the neck to relieve any discomfort.
- Hand wash in cold water with mild soap, air dry.

PAIN MANAGEMENT

POST-OPERATIVE PAIN MANAGEMENT

- You will be prescribed a combination of opioid pain medication and Tylenol to help control your pain. It is critical to use the opioid pain medication only as needed and to begin to wean as soon as you are able.
- Tylenol can be taken at the same time as the opioid pain medication.
- Ice can be extremely helpful with post-operative pain management - it helps reduce pain and swelling that occurs after surgery. When placing ice over your shoulder, make sure the ice is not placed directly onto your skin (ie, use a towel or other cloth). In the first few days, ice for 30 minutes and then remove the ice for 30 minutes and then repeat. Then apply as needed or after exercises.

POST-OPERATIVE MEDICATIONS

Oxycodone 5 mg

Take one tablet every 4-6 hours as needed for pain

Tylenol 325 mg

Take 2 tablets every 6 hours as needed for pain

Aspirin 325 mg

Take one tablet once a day for 4 weeks

Colace (docusate sodium) 100 mg

Take one tablet every 12 hours as needed for constipation

Zofran (ondansetron) 4 mg

Take one tablet every 8 hours as needed for nausea



PRECAUTIONS FOR THE FIRST 4-6 WEEKS POST OP

- Avoid tucking in a shirt
- No reaching for a back pocket
- No fastening a bra from the back
- No reaching across the body, such as putting on deodorant
- Avoid toileting/wiping that requires reaching behind
- Avoid jogging or running
- Avoid sleeping on the involved side

IF YOU DEVELOP ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SIGNS OR SYMPTOMS, YOU SHOULD CALL OUR OFFICE IMMEDIATELY:

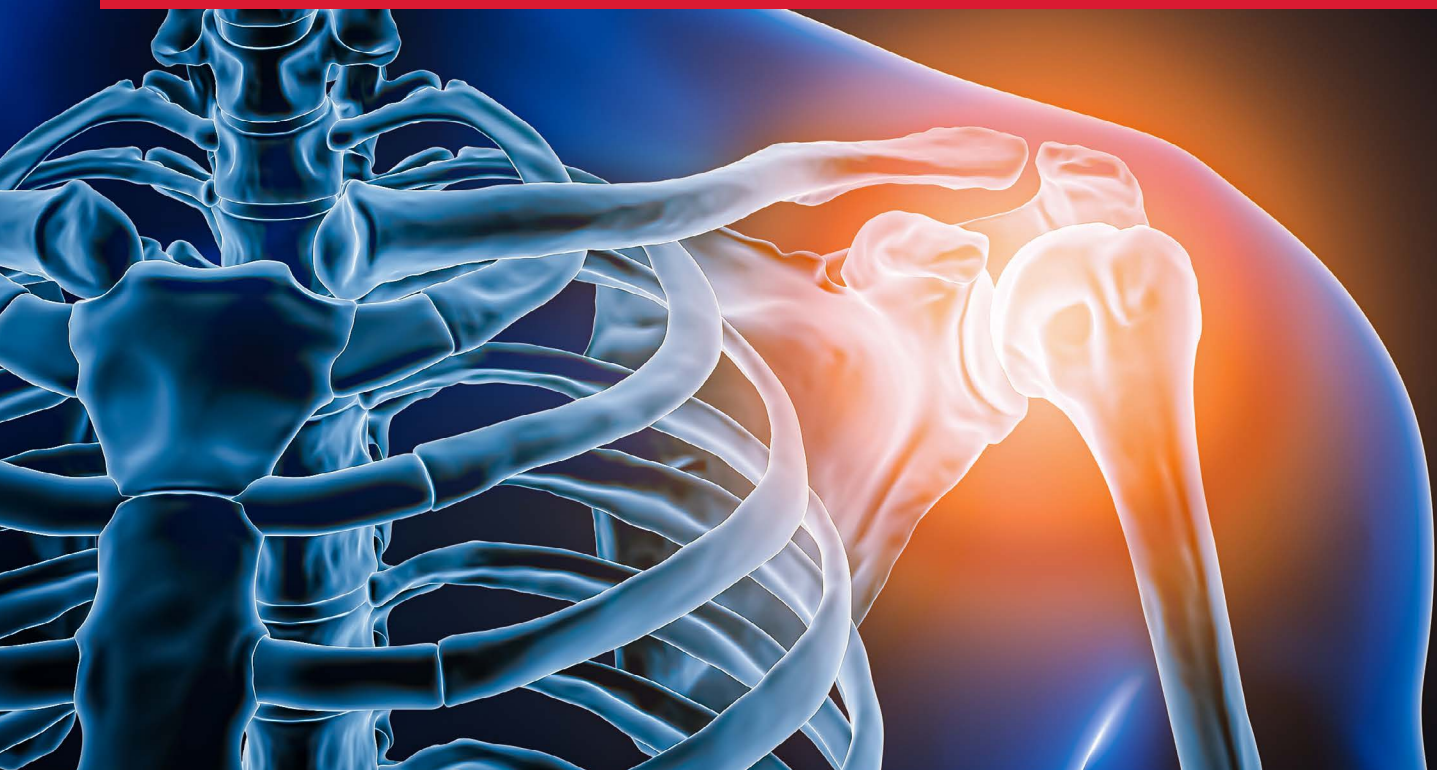
- Increased or uncontrollable pain
- Redness, increased swelling, or wound drainage
- Temperature greater than 101.5° F
- Uncontrollable nausea or vomiting
- Prolonged constipation or difficulty urinating

DURING OFFICE HOURS

(202) 677-6583

AFTER HOURS OR ON THE WEEKEND

(202) 741-3300



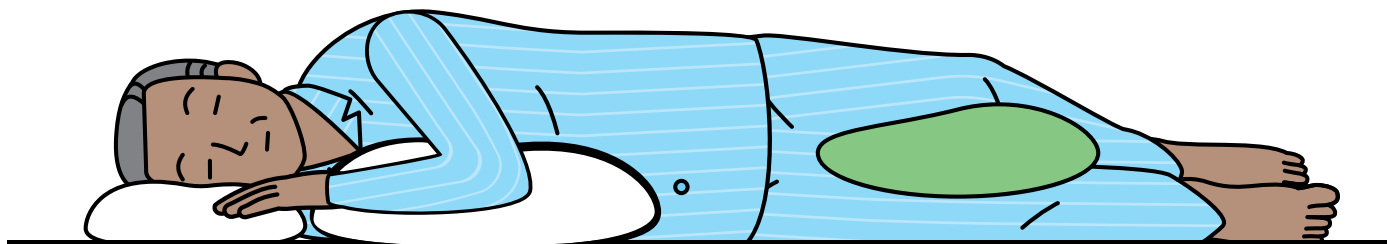
RECOVERY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Focus on proper posture and maintaining the posture during exercise
- Do not lean on the elbow of the involved side
- Sleep in a recliner chair for the first 2 weeks
- Avoid sleeping on the involved side
- Wear button down shirts, sleeveless shirts or a very loose-fitting top
- Do not push out of a chair, wheelchair or bed with the assistance of the involved side
- Prevent the arm from extending beyond the mid-plane of the trunk (While sitting, prop the arm up on pillows for example)

SLEEPING MODIFICATIONS

- Sleep in a recliner chair for the first 2 weeks
- If you do not have a recliner chair, purchasing a foam wedge can be helpful
- Avoid sleeping on the involved side

Once you are comfortable to lay on your back or uninjured side, it is helpful to have a pillow behind your elbow when sleeping in bed



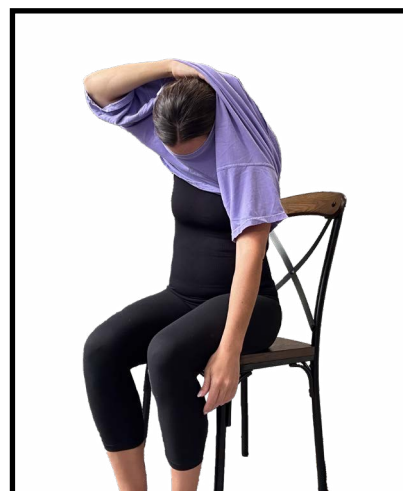
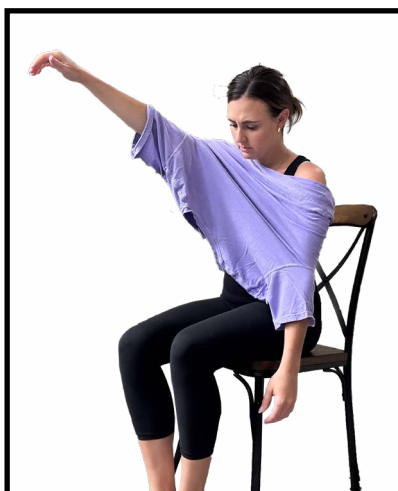
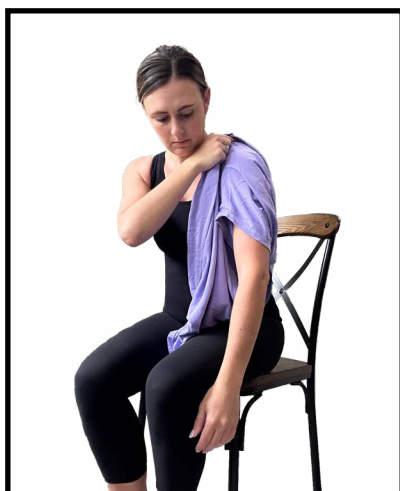
ACTIVITY MODIFICATIONS

- Wearing the right clothing following your surgery can make a great difference to your comfort and to the ease of getting yourself dressed. Opt for looser items of clothing that can be buttoned up rather than garments that need to be pulled over your head.
- Slip-on shoes or flip-flops will be a better option than shoes with laces unless you live with someone who can assist you with this task.
- Go through your daily routine. Move household objects you use regularly - plates, glasses, your toothbrush, etc. - to areas that are easily accessible. Waist level is best.
- It can be helpful to pre plan meals, such as cooking in bulk and freezing or purchasing easy to make items ahead of time.
- Washing dishes can be difficult early in recovery so purchasing paper products can make cleaning after meals easier.

ACTIVITY MODIFICATIONS WHILE EARLY IN RECOVERY

PUTTING ON A T-SHIRT (SEATED)

1. Position shirt on lap faced down with the bottom of the shirt face you.
2. Starting from the bottom of the shirt, use your unaffected arm and start threading the surgical side through toward the correct sleeve. If you are having difficulty, you may lean forward (like a pendulum) so that the surgical arm swings out and is free from the torso.
3. Pull sleeve on the surgical arm up to elbow and rest surgical arm against torso so that sleeve stays in place.
4. Thread unaffected arm through the remaining sleeve.
5. Gather collar and pull overhead.
6. Pull down on the bottom of the shirt.



PUTTING ON DEODORANT



Step 1: If you are able, use your affected hand to hold the deodorant.



Step 2: Remove the cap with your strong hand.



Step 3: Lean forward and let your affected arm dangle, then apply the deodorant with your strong hand.



Step 4: Use your strong hand to apply the deodorant to your strong arm.

BRUSHING YOUR TEETH



Step 1: Use your affected hand to stabilize the toothbrush.



Step 2: Unscrew or open the cap of the toothpaste with your strong hand.



Step 3: Continue using your strong hand to apply toothpaste to the brush.



Step 4: Use your strong hand to brush your teeth.

PUTTING ON SOCKS



Step 1: Cross one leg over your knee.



Step 2: Use your strong hand to spread open the sock. Place the sock over your foot.



Step 3: Slowly work the sock up your foot.

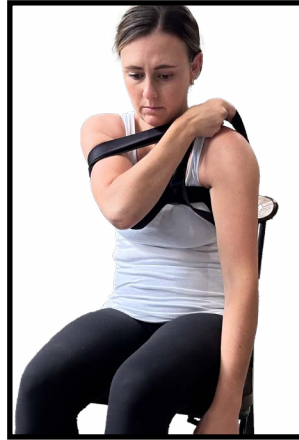


Step 4: Repeat for the other foot.

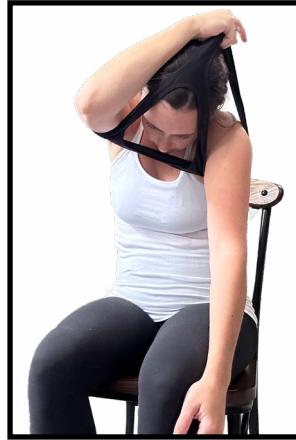
PUTTING ON A PULLOVER BRA



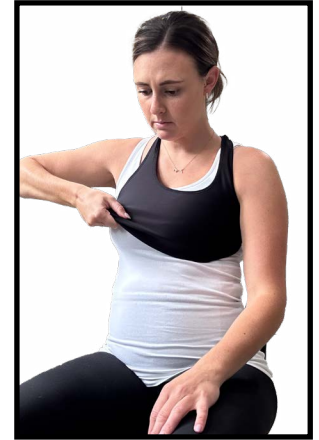
Step 1: Use your strong hand to pull the bra over your affected hand and up past the elbow.



Step 2: Slide your strong arm into the arm hole on the other side.



Step 3: Use your strong arm to grab the back of the bra and pull it over your head.

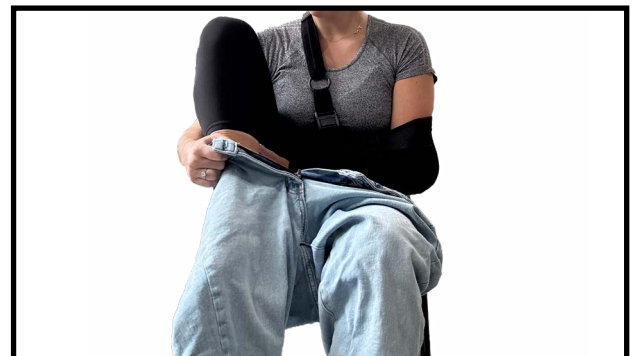


Step 4: Adjust the bra by pulling it down until it's comfortable.

PUTTING ON PANTS WITH A ZIPPER



Step 1: Cross the leg of your affected side over your knee. Use your strong hand to pull the pants over the foot of your leg on the affected side.



Step 2: Place your foot of your strong side into the pants. If you're able, you can stabilize the pants with your affected hand.



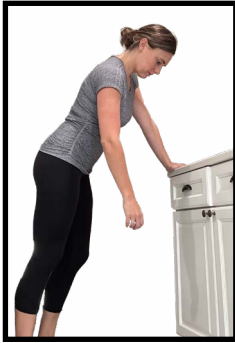
Step 3: Bring the pants up over both knees to prevent them from falling when you stand.



Step 4: Stand and pull up the pants. Use your affected hand to stabilize the pants, and zip up the pants with your strong hand while holding the lower end of the zipper taut.

RECOVERY RECOMMENDATIONS

PENDULUMS (CAN BE PERFORMED SEATED OR STANDING)



Standing: begin by leaning over, supporting your upper body with a table or chair standing with one foot in front of the other. Let the arm to be exercised hang straight down completely relaxed. Gently move your body in circular motions, allowing the relaxed arm to begin swinging in small circles. First rotate the arm clockwise, then repeat going counterclockwise.



Seated: Begin by leaning over, supporting your upper body with your non-surgical elbow on the thigh. Let the arm to be exercised hang straight down completely relaxed. Gently move your body in circular motions, allowing the relaxed arm to begin swinging in small circles. First rotate the arm clockwise, then repeat going counterclockwise.

Repeat 10-20x, every other hour. Your shoulder is to remain in the sling except when doing pendulum exercises.

Lastly, it is important to maintain motion of your elbow, wrist, and hand during recovery. Make sure to do these movements frequently. A good goal would be 10-20 reps of each, 3-4 x a day.



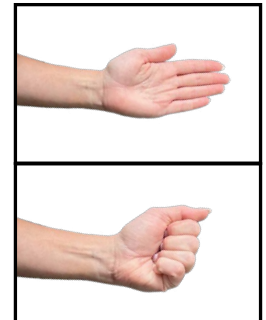
Bend your elbow



Rotate your forearm



Bend your wrist



Open and close your hand

