



**STERLING RIDGE
ORTHOPAEDICS
& SPORTS MEDICINE**

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POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS - CLAVICLE ORIF

**PLEASE READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS COMPLETELY AND ASK FOR CLARIFICATION
IF NECESSARY – DIRECT QUESTIONS TO YOUR NURSE BEFORE LEAVING THE
HOSPITAL OR VIA PHONE TO DR. EILERS STAFF AFTER ARRIVING HOME**

OFFICE NUMBER: 832.698.0111

WHAT CAN I EXPECT AFTER SURGERY?

- Pain, swelling, and bruising are not unusual after surgery.
- It is normal to feel drowsy, dizzy, or weak 24-48 hours afterwards.
- An upset stomach (nausea), vomiting, fatigue, and a low-grade fever (not over 101.4°F) are possible due to medication you received during surgery. These usually improve within 24 hours.

ICE THERAPY

- Begin immediately after surgery and continue until the first post-operative visit.
- If using a 'cryo-cuff' or similar ice/compression device, use as directed in the instruction manual.
- When using "real" ice, avoid direct skin contact > 20 mins to prevent damage/frostbite of skin.
- In either case, check the skin frequently for excessive redness, blistering or other signs of frostbite.

WOUND CARE

- You will have a water-tight dressing over your incision. Keep clean and dry until first post-operative visit.
 - If outer dressings become loose, you may remove them. Replace with large band-aids or other water-proof OTC dressing. **DO NOT REMOVE THE UNDERLYING STERI-STRIPS or ADHERENT GAUZE** if present.
- It is okay to shower directly over the band-aids as long as the incisions stay dry until your first post-operative appointment.
- Do not submerge (soak) the incisions in a bathtub, hot tub, or pool until they are completely healed.
- There will be steri-strips or adherent gauze over your incision. Leave in place until your first post-operative visit.
- Call our office with any questions regarding your dressings or incision care.

ACTIVITY

- Rest at home the day of and the day after surgery. Slowly increase your activity each day as you feel comfortable.
- Remain in the sling at all times other than personal hygiene, wardrobe changes, and home exercises.
 - Please contact our office and ask to speak with DME personnel with any sling questions
- Do not put weight through the operative extremity.
- Okay to remove sling 3x daily for bending of elbow, wrist, hand beginning on the first post-operative day.
- Do not engage in activities that increase shoulder pain over the first 7-10 days following surgery.
- When lying in bed, support your shoulder and arm with one or two pillows. You may find it more comfortable to sleep in a recliner/chair. Avoid lying flat.
- Squeeze your hand, and extend and bend your fingers for a count of 10. Do this exercise at least 4 times a day.
- Do not drive until your surgeon says it is okay. Do not drive if taking narcotic pain medications.

PHYSICAL THERAPY

- Begin exercises 3x daily starting the day after surgery (wrist flexion/extension, elbow flexion/extension, shoulder range of motion, pendulum swings) unless otherwise instructed. Three sets of 10-15 repetitions each are advised. If the exercises cause pain, stop and try again later in the day.
- Shoulder stiffness and discomfort are normal following surgery.
- Avoid movement of the arm against gravity or away from the body.
- Formal physical therapy will begin after your first post-operative visit if necessary.

DIET

- Drink plenty of fluids. If you are taking pain medication, do not drink alcohol.
- Start by drinking small amounts of fluids, such as water, clear carbonated beverages, tea, or soup.
- Gradually add bland foods to your diet, such as dry toast or crackers.
- Start with light meals. Resume your regular diet as you feel comfortable.
- Pain medications can cause constipation. Eat fiber (fruits and vegetables) and drink plenty of fluids.
- Take the prescribed stool softener as directed if taking narcotic pain medications.
- If loss of appetite following surgery, use Boost or Ensure meal replacement shakes for nutrition.

EMERGENCIES

- Contact the office if you are having any of these symptoms:
 - Painful swelling or numbness that progressively worsens
 - Fever of 101°F (38°C) or higher
 - Unrelenting pain
 - Persistent nausea and/or vomiting
 - Excessive bleeding or fluid from the surgical site
 - Symptoms of deep vein thrombosis (DVT) such as swelling, redness, warmth, or pain in your calf
 - Inability to urinate
 - Increased drowsiness from pain medication. Stop taking pain/narcotic medication if you become too drowsy
 - Increased or foul-smelling drainage from incision site
 - Significant redness, tenderness, or swelling around the incision
 - Separation of the skin closures

IF YOU HAVE A NEED THAT REQUIRES IMMEDIATE ATTENTION, PROCEED TO THE NEAREST EMERGENCY ROOM OR CALL 911