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Post-Operative Instructions for Shoulder Surgery

Activities:

1. You may remove the sling and allow the arm to dangle and do pendulum exercises. Do not actively move or lift the arm until cleared by Dr. Goodwiller.
2. Elevate the shoulder. A recliner works well early on for sleeping.
3. Use an ice pack for 20 minutes every 2-3 hours. There should be a cloth barrier between the ice pack and your skin at all times.
4. Do not drive until approved by the doctor. Do not drive if you are taking narcotics or muscle relaxants as they can cause drowsiness and slow your reaction time.
5. Return to work depends upon your type of employment and can be discussed at your postop appointments.

Diet:

1. Begin with liquids and light foods (Jell-O, soup, etc.). Progress to your normal diet if you are not nauseated. Sometimes the digestive system is slow to respond after anesthesia, in addition to the use of narcotic pain medication. The use of a mild over-the-counter laxative may be beneficial.

Medications:

1. Take your pain medication as needed, though not more than every 3-4 hours. Do not wait until you are in a lot of pain before taking the medication. It takes the medication 30-45 minutes to take effect.
2. Strong oral narcotic pain medications have been prescribed for the first few days. Use only as directed. Do not combine with alcoholic beverages. Do not drive, operate machinery, or make important decisions while taking narcotics.
3. Do not take Tylenol or acetaminophen in combination with pain medications that contain the same substances. You may find the contents of the pain medication on the bottle of your prescription.
4. It is not uncommon to have some stomach upset with the use of narcotic medication. For this reason take the medication with food. If your symptoms are severe, or the medication does not treat your symptoms of postoperative pain, please call the office and we will prescribe a different medication.