

## **Post-op PATIENT Instructions: PROXIMAL HUMERUS ORIF**

**Dressing:** A dressing has been applied to your shoulder to absorb any fluid/blood. A small amount of blood on the dressing is expected. Your recovery room nurse will teach you how to change your dressing. Begin dressing change 24-48 hours after surgery. Change the dressing each day, leaving the Sylke (white mesh tape over the incision) in place. Unless directed by your surgeon, **no salves, balms, or ointments (even antibiotic ointments) to the incisions.** Soreness and bruising is expected for several days afterward.

Showering is permitted 72 hours after surgery with the incisions covered. After showering, apply a new dry dressing. **Do NOT soak the incisions. No swimming pools/bathtubs/hot-tubs/beach water for 4 weeks or until cleared by your surgeon.**

**Ice:** Ice is a powerful anti-inflammatory. Cold compression (“ice machines”) are important to reducing pain and swelling. Use liberally (20-30 min./session) but protect the skin from direct contact (and frostbite).

**Activity:** Wear the immobilizer/sling. Remove the sling at least 3 times per day for hand, wrist, and elbow range of motion which decreases swelling. **NO ACTIVE SHOULDER MOTION.** Sleeping in a recliner with pillows behind the elbow may provide additional comfort. **No driving until permission is given by your surgeon.**

**Pain:** A nerve block has been performed for immediate post-op pain control by the anesthesiologist. It typically “wears off” at about 8-12 hrs following surgery. **Begin taking pain medications as soon as you BEGIN to experience pain!** These meds can take 45-60 minutes to start “working”. You do not want to play “catch-up” by letting your pain get out of control. Nausea, drowsiness, and constipation are common side effects of narcotics. **Adequate fluid intake and a stool softener obtained over the counter from your local pharmacy is important to minimize constipation.** Call the office if you are unable to tolerate your medication.

**\*NARCOTIC MEDICATIONS ALONE WILL NOT PROVIDE COMPLETE PAIN RELIEF. COLD COMPRESSION (ICE MACHINES), TENS USE, AND REGULAR TYLENOL AND ANTI-INFLAMMATORIES (ALEVE/IBUPROFEN, IF MEDICALLY OK) ARE CRITICAL PARTS OF YOUR PAIN CONTROL PLAN. REQUEST FOR NARCOTIC REFILL WILL ONLY BE ACCEPTED DURING BUSINESS HOURS. PLEASE GIVE 24-48 HOURS FOR MEDICATION REFILL REQUESTS TO BE ADDRESSED\***

**Precautions:** Call the office (813)-754-1199 if you develop: temperatures >101°F, shortness of breath, chest pain, uncontrolled pain, marked redness/hives, persistent drainage, new onset numbness, significant incisional/calf swelling, or any other concerns. **Call 911 or report to the nearest emergency room with any concerns for medical emergencies**