

## Recovering after Shoulder Arthroscopy (Rotator Cuff Repair, Stabilization)

### How do I control pain after surgery?

- For the first 24 hours after surgery, take your pain medication as prescribed. As your pain decreases, take your medication less often.
- Ice for the first 3-4 days fairly continuously. Ice after performing your exercises to help control pain and swelling. After the first 4 days use it:
  - Following your exercises or any type of effort
  - If the arm feels swollen or hot
  - To decrease pain
  - To help you sleep

### Will I be in a sling after surgery?

- When you wake up you will be wearing a **Slingshot** sling (a sling with a pillow between your arm and side). **If you are wearing sling without a pillow, disregard this information and speak to your surgeon regarding restrictions.**
  - The purpose of the sling is to protect your surgical repair, the pillow is important to keep your arm in the optimal position to protect the repair, do not remove it unless advised by your surgeon.
  - Wear the sling all the time, including when you are sleeping. You may remove it to exercise and bathe but should keep your arm supported.
  - You will be required to wear the sling fulltime for at least 6 weeks.
- **Wear clothing that is easy to get on for the drive home (button up/zip up).**

### When do I start exercises after surgery?

- Begin the exercises 24-48 hours after surgery and do them consistently 3-4 times/day as instructed. You will be given an exercise sheet to follow until your initial physiotherapy appointment. These exercises are to prevent hand/wrist/elbow/neck stiffness while wearing your sling.

### When can I drive after surgery?

- Please confirm with your surgeon when you are allowed to drive. Expect not to drive for a minimum of 6-9 weeks after surgery.

### When can I return to work/sport after surgery?

- Return to work depends on your occupation. Your surgeon and physiotherapist can advise you on safe return to work.
- On average, patients return to sedentary **work** in 2-4 months and **sports** 9 to 12 months.

### Will I need physiotherapy?

- Your surgeon will provide you with a referral for physiotherapy. Physiotherapy is **STRONGLY** recommended to guide your rehabilitation.

You may choose to go to any physiotherapy clinic you wish. Physiotherapy is available at no charge to you at:

- Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital: 519-246-5901
- Four Counties Health Services (Newbury): 519-693-6501