New West sports medicine & orthopaedic surgery

2810 W. 35th Street
Kearney, NE 68845
Phone: (308) 865-2570 or (800) 408-1689

After Your Rotator Cuff Repair
Shoulder Surgery
Dr. Paul Nielsen

Dressings and Wound Care

- After surgery you will have a bulky dressing on your shoulder for the first day
- The day after surgery, you should remove all your dressings
    - Place band-aids over the poke-hole type incision and sutures daily
    - You may shower over your incisions but do not submerge in water like a tub

Pain Medicine

- You will be prescribed several medications to control your pain after surgery
    - See the separate sheet about prescribed medications for further instructions
    - These medications work in different ways to help control your pain without excessive doses of medications like opioids
    - You are allowed to drive when you are not taking prescription pain medication

Activity

- Keep your arm in the sling except for exercises and showering
- Move your hand, wrist, and elbow joints immediately after surgery
    - Using the stress ball helps with swelling and weakness in your arm
- Do shoulder pendulum and table slide exercises at least 3 times daily after surgery
    - See next page for exercise pictures

Follow-Up Care

- You will have an appointment in clinic 10-14 days after surgery to remove sutures
    - Additional appointments are at 6 and 12 weeks after surgery
- Formal therapy is usually started at 2 weeks after surgery

Results

- Some soreness and stiffness often persists until 6-12 months after surgery
- About 75-80% of patients have a full recovery after this surgery

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Exercises Immediately After Rotator Cuff Repair Surgery (0-2 Weeks)

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Shoulder Pendulums (Codman's)

- Lean over either standing or in a chair with the repaired arm hanging freely
- Move your body in a gentle circular motion so that your arm rotates
    - Try to use your body to make the shoulder move, not the strength of your shoulder

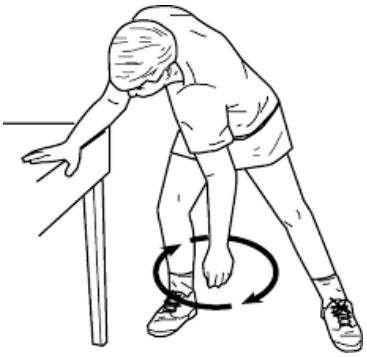
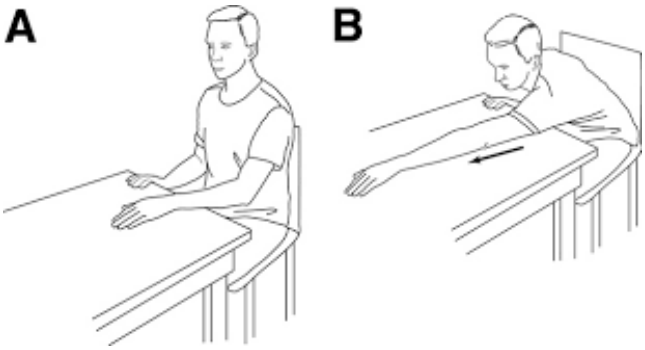


Table Slides

- Rest your hand on the table to start
- Slowly "walk" your hand forward on the table to move your shoulder forward
    - Keep the entire forearm resting on the table to avoid over-using the shoulder
- Then "walk" your hand back towards you until your elbow is at your side again