

## **Greater Hartford Orthopedic Group, P.C.**

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### **Post-Operative Instructions: Shoulder Surgery**

#### What to Expect

##### *In the first 12-24 hours:*

Following your shoulder surgery, you will leave the hospital or surgery center in a shoulder sling with a bulky bandage and an ice pack on your shoulder. You may leave this on for the first 24 hours, until seen by Dr. Kimmel in the office. The ice may be changed every 30 minutes or as needed for comfort. It is okay to just rest the ice on top of the shoulder over the bandage. You will be given a prescription for pain medication upon departure from the hospital/surgery center. Although you may have received a nerve block for pain control prior to the surgery, it is recommended that you begin taking the pain medication as prescribed so you will remain comfortable throughout the night and into the next day. Since pain medication may cause stomach upset, it is advisable to take the medication with either food or drink. Many patients find it difficult to sleep following surgery. It is recommended that you remain in the sling for sleep and find a comfortable position, either slightly propped up in bed with pillows or comfortably in a recliner chair. Please make sure to contact Dr. Kimmel's office to make an appointment for the following day in Enfield, (860) 253-0276 or Hartford, (860) 728-6740.

##### *The Next Day:*

You will be seen in the office for your first post-operative visit the following day. It is recommended that you bring another person with you to help address any questions or concerns. Since you will still be in the sling, it is advisable to wear something comfortable that you will be able to take on and off, such as a button-down shirt. At the first office visit, the bulky bandage will be replaced by large band aids to cover the incisions. Depending on the procedure done, x-rays may or may not be taken in the office. It is recommended to take pain medication prior to the visit because we will begin to move the shoulder through some stretching exercises. You will be taught these stretching exercises in the office, so that you may do them at home for the first week. At this visit you will be given a physical therapy prescription. Dr. Kimmel will talk with you about when to start the formal physical therapy program

##### *The First Week:*

It is very important in the first week that you **DO NOT OVERDO IT!!!** The first week, you must allow your shoulder to recover from the surgery. The only activity you should be doing with the shoulder are the gentle stretching exercises demonstrated in the

office. Many people try and test the shoulder within the first week, but it is very important that you take it easy. Avoid reaching away from the body, lifting of any kind, or overhead lifting. Do not get the incisions wet until 3 days after the surgery (Thursday if your surgery was Monday, and Saturday if your surgery was Wednesday). You may change the band aids daily, covering the incisions. Do not apply any cream, lotion, or antibacterial ointment to the incision. You will be seen in the office 7-8 days following the surgery for suture removal. Please visit [www.ctortho.com](http://www.ctortho.com) to access the appropriate post-operative protocol form.