



# Charlotte Shoulder Institute

Patient Centered. Research Driven. Outcome Maximized.

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## DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS & PHYSICAL THERAPY INSTRUCTIONS FOR CLAVICLE OPEN REDUCTION INTERNAL FIXATION

Initial recovery after shoulder surgery entails healing, controlling swelling and discomfort and regaining some shoulder motion. The following instructions are intended as a guide to help you achieve these goals until your 1<sup>st</sup> postoperative visit.

### A. Comfort:

Although surgery typically uses small incisions around the shoulder joint, swelling and discomfort can be present. To minimize discomfort, please do the following:

1. **Ice-** Ice controls swelling and discomfort by slowing down the circulation in your shoulder. Place crushed ice in cloth covered plastic bag over your shoulder for no more than 20 minutes, 3 times a day.
2. **Pain Medication-** Take medications as prescribed, but only as often as necessary. Avoid alcohol and driving if you are taking pain medication.
3. **Sling-** A sling has been provided for your comfort and to stabilize your shoulder for proper healing.
4. **Driving** – Driving is NOT permitted as long as the sling is necessary.

### B. Activities:

1. You are immobilized with a sling for comfort.

2. Your sling may be removed for gentle range-of-motion (PROM) exercises and hygiene.
3. While your sling is off you should flex and extend your elbow and wrist – (3x a day for 15 repetitions) to avoid elbow stiffness.
4. Physical therapy will be discussed at your 1<sup>st</sup> post-op visit.
5. Athletic activities such as throwing, lifting, swimming, bicycling, jogging, running, and stop-and-go sports should be avoided until cleared by Dr. Romanowski.

**C. Wound Care:**

1. Keep the dressing on, clean and dry until your follow-up visit.
2. Should your dressing fall off, You may apply band-aids to the small incisions around your shoulder.
3. You may shower the first day after surgery with the dressings in place.
4. Bathing, swimming, and soaking should be avoided for two weeks after your surgery.

**D. Eating:**

Your first few meals after surgery should include light, easily digestible foods and plenty of liquids, as some people experience slight nausea as a temporary reaction to anesthesia.

**C. Call your physician if:**

1. Pain persists or worsens in the first few days after surgery.
2. Excessive redness or drainage of cloudy or bloody material from the wounds. (Clear red tinted fluid and some mild drainage should be expected). Drainage of any kind 5 days after surgery should be reported to the doctor.
3. Temperature elevation greater than 101°.
4. Pain, swelling, or redness in your arm or hand.
5. Numbness or weakness in your arm or hand.
6. Chest pain or difficulty breathing.

**D. Return to the office**

Your first return to the office should be within the first 1-2 weeks after your surgery. Call Dr. Romanowski's office to make your first postoperative appointment.