POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

• Arthroscopic or Open Rotator Cuff Repair
• Proximal or Subpectoral Biceps Tendodesis

Post Operative

Dressing
- Keep dressing clean and dry.
- Remove dressing after 72 hours and place a clean band aid over your incision(s). Change this band aid 1 time a day until follow up appointment.

Showering
- You may shower after dressing is removed after the first 72 hours.
- Gently wash the incision with soap and water. Do NOT scrub. Once you are out of the shower, pat the area dry and apply new dressing as directed above.
- Do NOT submerge your incision (pools, baths or hot tubs) for at least 3 weeks after surgery. You should not submerge your incision until it is completely healed.
- Do NOT use any powders or creams on your incision.

Clothing
- Use the following steps when dressing:
  1. Lean forward so the arm you had surgery on is hanging straight down.
  2. With the other arm, gently pull the shirt over your operative arm as it is hanging straight down.
  3. Gently pull the shirt over your head and non-operative arm, moving the arm you had surgery on as little as possible.
  4. You may use both hands to fasten any buttons by bending your arm at the elbow, keeping your operative arm against your side.

Sleeping
- Most patients find it more comfortable to sleep in a recliner after shoulder surgery. However, you may also sleep in a bed with pillows propped up behind you.
- To get out of bed, roll onto your “good side” and use your non-operative arm to push yourself up into a sitting position.
- We do NOT recommend sleeping on your operative shoulder for at least 12 weeks after shoulder surgery.

Sling
- Remain in your sling full time including at night for the first 6 weeks.
- You may come out of the sling while bathing, sitting quietly resting, and to perform your home exercises as outlined below.

Driving
- You may ride in a car immediately after surgery. If you are going to be in the car for long periods of time, we recommend getting out or the car at least 1 time an hour to walk around.
- We do NOT recommend driving while you are in the sling as you can be held liable if you are in an accident. Therefore, we recommend waiting at least 3-4 weeks before attempting to drive.
- We recommend practicing in a parking lot to ensure you are able to control the vehicle.
Remember, you are NOT allowed to drive while taking any pain medicine.

Activity
- Do NOT actively use the shoulder for the first 6 weeks. No pushing, pulling or lifting.
- Gentle use of the elbow, wrist and hand is allowed after surgery, as long as your arm is at your side. For example, immediately after surgery you may come out of your sling to do basic self care activities such as washing your face, feeding yourself, reading, writing, typing and dressing. Do NOT lift anything heavier than a coffee cup.
*If you had a biceps tenodesis you should avoid activities that involve resisted supination of your wrist (this is the motion that occurs when you turn your palm up to the ceiling) for the first 6 weeks. For example, avoid opening jar lids or turning doors knobs.
- Do NOT use your operative arm to weight bear or transfer for at least 12 weeks. If you are using a cane or walker, you may use your arm for balance only.

Physical Therapy
- There are 3 exercises that you can do on your own immediately after surgery.

1. Pendulum Exercises
   - While standing bend at the waist. Support your uninvolved arm on a table or chair and allow your involved arm to hang freely while keeping your elbow straight.
   - Move your hips in a circular motion to generate movement at your shoulder. This allows the shoulder to move without doing any of the work.
   - Gently make clockwise circles with your involved arm for one minute.
   - Reverse the direction and make counterclockwise circles for one minute.
   - Repeat 3 times per day.

2. Passive Range of Motion
   - While sitting or lying use your uninvolved hand to grasp your involved wrist.
   - Use your uninvolved arm to gently raise your involved arm up above your head, and then continue to use your uninvolved arm to lower it back down. You may raise your arm straight in front of you as well as at the side. You may go as high as you can tolerate, including above your head.
   - You may also have a family member move the arm for you while sitting or laying down.
   - Do this for 10 repetitions and repeat the exercise 3 times per day.

3. Arm Slides
   - While sitting or standing, use your uninvolved hand to grasp your involved wrist.
   - Use your uninvolved arm to gently raise your involved arm up onto a counter or table top.
   - With your involved forearm resting on the counter or table top, gently begin to move your body away from counter or table.
   - Continue to move your body away from the counter to gradually increase your range of motion. You may move your body away as far as you can tolerate.
   - Be careful NOT to lean or put weight on your operative arm while it is on the table.
It is also important to make sure you move your elbow, wrist and hand to prevent these joints from getting stiff. You may move these joints in all directions as long as your arm is by your side.

Icing
- Use the polar unit that you received on and off for comfort after surgery.
- You may use the unit as much as you like, but should turn it off every few hours to prevent freezing the skin. You should also protect your skin by using a towel between the polar pad and your skin.

Medications
- Take your pain medication as directed. Pain medication can make you constipated, so make sure you are consuming plenty of water and fiber. If necessary, you can also try an over the counter stool softener. You may also take your pain medication with food to help prevent nausea.
- Take your antibiotic as directed. It is important to complete the entire prescription.
- Resume home medications as directed prior to surgery.

7-10 days Follow Up Appointment
During your first postoperative appointment it is likely that you will be seen by our Physician Assistant. The intent of this visit is to simply check your incision and go over some basic instructions. The physician will be available if there are any questions or concerns.

Dressing
- During this appointment your stitches will be removed and steri strips will be applied to your skin. You may take the steri strips off after 1 week. Do not worry if they fall off sooner.

Showering
- You may continue to shower, even with the steri strips on.

Sling
- Continue to wear your sling as directed above.

Activity
- Continue to follow the restrictions outlined above.
- You may now participate in low impact cardiovascular activities at this time if desired. This includes walking, biking and using the elliptical. Remain in your sling so you do no use your operative arm. Be VERY careful getting on and off the exercise equipment. If you trip or fall, it is possible that you will injure your shoulder and prolong your recovery.

Physical Therapy
- Continue to perform your home exercises outlined above, increasing your motion as tolerated.
- *If you had ONLY a biceps tenodesis (and NO rotator cuff repair) you may be allowed to start “Active Assisted” exercises once you are 4 weeks out from surgery. This means that your
operative arm can start doing some of the work as you work on your range of motion exercises. If you have any questions, please check with your provider.

- We will assess your range of motion on this visit. If necessary, you may be given a prescription for formal physical therapy. Otherwise, we typically start physical therapy anywhere around 6 weeks after surgery, depending on the size of your tear. Call the number on the back of the prescription provided and set up an appointment.

6 Week Follow Up Appointment

Sling
- You may now discontinue wearing your sling.

Activity
- You are now allowed to gently start actively moving your shoulder.
- Do NOT use your shoulder to push, pull or lift greater than 5 pounds for the next 6 weeks.
- Continue to avoid using your arm to weight bear or transfer for another 2 weeks.
- You are allowed to get in a pool at this time (as long as your incisions are healed) and work on range of motions exercises. However, you are NOT allowed to swim.

Physical Therapy
- If you have not received one already, you will likely be given a prescription for physical therapy at this time. They will continue to work on your range of motion, and will also begin strengthening exercises. You may discontinue physical therapy whenever you and the physical therapist feel you are ready.

12 Week Follow Up Appointment
- After the first 3 months basic healing has occurred. Over the course of the next 3 months, you will continue to progress your range of motion and strength. In fact, the condition of your shoulder may continue improve over course of the next 2 years.

Activity
- At this time we will remove your restrictions. You are now allowed to use your shoulder to push, pull or lift within reason.
- Even though technically you have no restrictions, you are still going to be weak.
- Start slowly, and gradually increase your activity level letting pain be your guide.
- You may now participate in higher impact activities such as golf, bowling, tennis, running, swimming, gardening, shooting, chopping wood, fishing, lifting weights, and throwing. You may also cut the grass at this time (this includes using a riding mower).
- There are no permanent restrictions after this procedure. However, it is possible that repetitive overhead activity can aggravate your shoulder. Let pain be your guide.

6 Month Follow Up Appointment
- Depending on how you are doing, we may ask to see you again at 6 months out from surgery.