SHOULDER SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS

Lance E. LeClere, MD • Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery · Chief, Orthopaedic Sports Medicine · Vanderbilt University Medical Center

Some pain after surgery is expected. These instructions cover your medications, activity, wound care and the warning signs that should prompt a call. **Bring this sheet to your first post-operative visit.** If anything here differs from what you were told at discharge, follow those instructions and call the office to confirm.

PAIN CONTROL

You will likely need pain medication frequently for the **first 1–2 days** after surgery. As the pain improves, begin to wean off the opioid pain medication.

OPIOID PAIN MEDICATION	◆ **Percocet or Vicodin** — take 1–2 tablets every 4 hours as needed ◆ Begin weaning off as soon as the pain starts to improve ◆ If you received a **nerve block**, take pain medication before going to sleep the day of surgery — blocks typically wear off in the middle of the night
ANTI-INFLAMMATORY	◆ **Motrin (ibuprofen)** — up to 800 mg every 8 hours as needed for pain
STOOL SOFTENER	◆ **Colace or Surfak** — take daily to prevent constipation from the opioid pain medication
NAUSEA	◆ **Phenergan or Zofran** — take as needed for nausea
BLOOD CLOT PREVENTION	◆ **Aspirin 81 mg** — beginning the day after surgery, take one 81 mg aspirin **twice per day for 4 weeks** ◆ Follow the directions on the bottle if they differ from the above

ACTIVITY & RECOVERY

SLING & ACTIVITY — FIRST WEEKS

- **Keep the shoulder in the sling at all times**, except for showering or bathing and for pendulum exercises
- Pendulums are performed **three times daily for 5–10 minutes**, as instructed in clinic
- **Only let the arm hang — do not actively use the shoulder muscles**
- Perform hand gripping and forearm rotation several times daily while in the sling

PHYSICAL THERAPY — FIRST 2 WEEKS

- Therapy will begin **within the first 2 weeks** after surgery. The referral has been placed, or your athletic trainer has been notified
- Speak with Dr. LeClere's clinic staff about the therapy recommendations for your specific shoulder procedure
- Your specific rehabilitation protocol will be discussed at your first post-operative visit in **4–14 days**

DIET — AFTER SURGERY

- Resume your regular diet
- Increase fiber and fluids to prevent constipation from anesthesia and opioid pain medication
- Avoid supplements; a multivitamin may be taken
- **No alcohol while taking opioid pain medication**

DRIVING & TRAVEL — FIRST 2 WEEKS

- **No driving or operating machinery while taking opioid pain medication**
- We strongly recommend **against** car trips longer than 2 hours or airline travel in the first 2 weeks because of the risk of blood clots

FOLLOW-UP — 4–14 DAYS

- You should have an appointment with your surgeon **4–14 days** after the day of surgery
- If one has not been scheduled, contact the clinic as soon as possible

PROUD MEDICAL TEAM FOR

Lance E. LeClere, MD
Orthopaedic Sports Medicine & Shoulder Surgery

Appointments
615-936-7846

Website
LanceLeClereMD.com

Athletic Trainer
Justin Tatman · 615-421-4160

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

WOUND CARE & CONCERNS

ICE & COLD THERAPY — WEEK 1

- For pain, discomfort or swelling you may use ice packs, or a polar care device if one was provided
- The **maximum benefit is in the first week** after surgery
- **Use ice for no more than 1 hour at a time**
- Check your skin after icing to be sure there are no problems

DRESSINGS, WOUNDS & SHOWERING — FIRST 4 WEEKS

- Keep the dressings in place until the **third post-operative day** (at least 72 hours from the time of surgery) unless you are told otherwise. Keep them clean and dry
- After removal you may cover the wounds with band-aids or gauze, but this is not required. No ointments or creams are needed
- Once the dressings are off at 72 hours you may **shower**, letting the water run over the wounds. **Do not scrub the wounds**
- **No submerged bathing for 4 weeks** — no hot tubs, pools, ocean or bathtubs

CONCERNS FOLLOWING SURGERY

Our office can assist with most concerns during normal business hours. **Message the triage nurse through My Health at Vanderbilt for the quickest response** — portal messages are monitored Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

CONTACT THE CLINIC FOR

- Increasing pain or swelling not relieved by medication, ice and elevation
- Redness, warmth, increased incision tenderness, drainage or foul smell
- Bleeding that does not stop
- Numbness in the arm or hand
- Temperature over 101.4°F
- Any other concern

GO TO THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT FOR

- Headache following spinal anesthesia
- Prolonged dizziness
- General weakness
- Sensations or experiences recalled from your operation or procedure
- Shortness of breath or chest pain

NIGHTS & WEEKENDS
615-936-7846

Call to speak with the on-call orthopaedic resident. My Health at Vanderbilt portal messages are not monitored on weekends.

LANCE E. LECLERE, MD

CLINIC LOCATIONS

Belle Meade Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine
6002 Highway 100, Nashville, TN 37205

Vanderbilt Orthopaedics Nashville West
6606 Charlotte Pike, Suite 104, Nashville, TN 37209

Vanderbilt Orthopaedics Franklin
206 Bedford Way, Franklin, TN 37064

APPOINTMENTS & QUESTIONS

Vanderbilt Orthopaedics
615-936-7846

Justin Tatman, MS, ATC, LAT
615-421-4160 (direct)

Laura Taylor, PA
615-936-7846

ONLINE

LanceLeClereMD.com
vumc.org/orthopaedics

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