



The First Name in Specialized Orthopedic Care

222 Middle Country Road
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Smithtown, NY 11787

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS ELBOW ARTHROSCOPY/SURGERY James M. Paci, M.D.

1. Day of Surgery – Instructions Immediate Post-op:

- A. Relax. Diet: as tolerated.
- B. Ice to elbow every hour while awake for twenty minutes.
- C. Pain medication every 4-6 hours as needed for pain. It is helpful to take pain medication approximately one-half hour prior to exercise session.
- D. You may take arm from sling and begin exercises gently as directed by Dr. Paci. No exercise on the day of surgery.
- E. Make sure that you have a Physical Therapy post-operative appointment preferably the day after surgery, but no later than the third post-operative day, unless otherwise directed by Dr. Paci. Bring your physical therapy script and protocol.

Special Note for Patients with Nerve Block:

- Do not leave ice machine running for over 20 minutes while block is effective due to risk of frost bite.
- Take pain medication prior to the block wearing off. Otherwise, the pain will get ahead of you.

2. First Post – Operative Day:

- A. Continue ice pack every one to two hours while awake, or at least twenty minutes prior to and after exercise session.
- B. Pain medication as needed every 4-6 hours.
- C. Exercise should be done to the best of your ability. Try to accomplish a little more each time you do them.
- D. **If you are not splinted**, you may remove your bandage from the surgical area and shower in 24 hours. Cleanse arthroscopy sites with Peroxide or Betadine. Apply band-aids and gauze to these wounds. **Do not remove steri-strips, these keep the incision closed and stitches in place.** You will need to keep your incision sites dry by covering wound with waterproof bandages when taking a shower (these can be purchased at your local pharmacy) when taking a shower.
* Make sure you place a 2 x 2 gauze on the incision before placing the waterproof Band-Aid so the band-aid is not directly on the incision. Remove Band-Aides and pat incisions dry after showering
- E. **If you are splinted**, do not remove splint to shower. You will need to keep your splint and incision sites dry by covering with cast cover (these can be purchased at your local pharmacy) while taking a shower. **DO NOT SUBMERGE YOUR INCISION SITE(S) IN A BATH OR POOL!!!!**
- F. Do this until your first postoperative visit.



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3. Second Post – Operative Day Until Return Visit:

- A. Continue ice pack as needed.
- B. Continue exercises. Call your physical therapist if you have any questions about these exercises.

NOTE: Your elbow will be very swollen. It may take a week or longer for this to go away. It is also common to notice burning around the elbow as the swelling resolves. If excessive bleeding occurs, please notify your physician.

For Return Appointments:

- 4. A return appointment will be scheduled prior to your surgery and will be approximately 10-14 days from surgery. If you have any questions, please call our surgical coordinator at 631-719-9071.

A. Your first return appointment will take place in Dr. Paci's office in Woodbury or Smithtown. You will see Dr. Paci and/or his PA at this visit.

B. Your surgical photos will be reviewed at this visit and any questions will be answered. Your sutures will be removed, if they have not been removed by your physical therapist.

- 5. If you have any problems or questions, please call our surgical coordinator at **631-719-9071** and ask for Kristina during office hours 8:00 – 4:30. If you have a problem after hours, **call the main line at 516-536-2800**, follow the prompts, and the answering service will contact Dr. Paci or one of his partners.

Please call if you experience any of the following:

- A. Excessive pain, not controlled by pain medication
- B. Discomfort, swelling or redness in the calf (behind the leg, between the knee and ankle)
- C. Temperature/Fever >101F or chills
- D. Chest pain or shortness of breath
- E. Excessive redness or discharge from or around the surgical site

7. It is our office policy that narcotic pain medications will not be refilled after hours. If you are running low on pain medication and need a refill prior to your scheduled appointment, please contact our medication line at **516-536-2800** and follow the appropriate prompts and they will have Dr. Paci determine if a refill will be ordered.

8. Any activity that requires precise thinking and accuracy must be avoided for the first twelve hours after surgery and while taking pain medication, which includes operating machinery and/or driving a vehicle.

