

Thomas F. Holoavacs, MD

Capsular Release

Patient information/instructions

3-5 Days leading up to surgery – Please see the pre-surgery packet for more detailed information

- 5 Days leading up to surgery – Please see the pre-surgery packet for more detailed information –
- Please see preop instructions for Arthroscopy at MGH West. - Please set up your physical therapy appointments to the day after surgery.
- You will be provided with a Physical therapy prescription the day of surgery.

Immediately after surgery:

- You will discontinue the use of the sling the day after your surgery (once your nerve block wears off). This is for initial comfort only. Start coming out of the sling as soon as you can to re-establish ROM.
- Apply cold packs to the operated shoulder to reduce pain. Move your fingers, hand and elbow to increase circulation.
- As the nerve block in your shoulder wears off you may need pain medication – you will receive a prescription for when you go home.
- You may be instructed to take a 325 mg Aspirin for the purpose of protection against blood clots.

24-48 hours after surgery

- Initial post op bandages should stay on for 48 hours. These bandages are water-tight and you may shower with them on.
- After 48 hours the bandage can be removed. When showering please cover the area with plastic wrap or another water tight bandage to keep it dry for the next 7-10 days.
- The steri-strips (thin white bandages directly over the incision) should remain on the incision until they fall off on their own.
- Remove the sling 3-5 times a day to gently move the arm **PASSIVELY** in a pendulum motion.

10 days after your surgery:

- Please arrange for a post-operative appointment with Dr. Holoavacs or the Physician Assistant for follow up 7-10 days post-op for additional instructions.
- Begin motion - passive ROM, Pendulums immediately.

1-6 Weeks after your surgery:

- If possible, we strongly advise pool therapy starting at week 2 for increased passive range of motion. (This will be reviewed with you at your first pre-operative visit.) o This is in addition to “normal” physical therapy. If your PT facility does not have a

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pool, you should get access to a pool independently for passive exercises that will be reviewed at your post op visit.

6-8 Weeks after your surgery:

- Stretch your shoulder regularly throughout the day.
- Schedule a follow up visit at 6-8 weeks after your surgery for follow up/monitoring.
- **IF APPROVED by Dr. Holovacs**, you will begin strengthening with the guidance of your physical therapist **8 weeks after your surgery**.
 - o Continue to avoid lifting heavy objects.
 - o You may use your affected arm for normal daily activities involved with dressing, bathing and self care. Any forceful pushing or pulling activities are to be avoided.
- At this point you may continue to progress through strengthening with your physical therapist. Gradually return to normal activity.

*******Please keep in mind this schedule/protocol is patient dependent. Your timeline may be altered to assure appropriate progressions through rehab. Should you have any questions please feel free to call the office at (617) 726-0298*******

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ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How should I manage my wound site, dressing and steri-strips?

- You may shower with a watertight bandage in two days, but keep the incisions dry for seven to ten days. Try not to let the direct spray of water from the showerhead hit the incision.
- Remove the large surgical dressing 48 hours after surgery. Allow the steri-strips to fall off on their own (this could take up to 3 weeks).

Do I need to wear a sling/immobilizer? If so, how long do I wear it and when can I take it off during the day?

- You will be in a sling initially for comfort only. You are encouraged to discontinue the use of the sling the day after surgery to encourage use of the arm, frequent stretching and improved ROM.

What are my precautions regarding movements and positions after surgery? What positions should I avoid?

- There are no limitations to motion and we encourage you to work aggressively on ROM with the guidance of your physical therapist.

When should I begin formal physical therapy? How often do I need to go?

- Physical therapy should usually be initiated THE DAY AFTER surgery. You should do PT 5 days a week for the first 2 weeks. This includes physical therapy sessions at the clinic, in addition to a home exercise program for range of motion and postural exercises. You will eventually be prescribed strengthening exercises.
- If your PT practice requires a prescription prior to making an appointment we can fax one over with a tentative protocol. Please provide us with the fax number and contact information of the PT practice you have chosen for your therapy.

When may I return to recreational activities?

- Return to activities is specific to the particular activity. Always seek permission from your surgeon and therapist prior to starting any sports related activity.

What is the process to have work notes, school notes, FMLA paperwork, and other documents filled out by Dr. Holovac's office?

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- Please turn this paperwork in as soon as possible. This will allow time for it to be filled out prior to your procedure.
- Please make an effort to include as much information as possible. Fill out any personal information – name, DOB, address, date of injury, employer information... etc.
- Turn-around time for this paperwork is 7-10 days. Please understand the high volume of paperwork our office receives. We are unable to fill out this type of paperwork immediately/short notice.

When can I return to work?

- Typically we recommend taking 1-2 weeks off of work for recovery. At that time we expect you will be off of pain medications and have more of your energy back.
- If your job requires any lifting, pushing or pulling > 1-2 lbs or does not allow you to work while in a sling you may need to take additional time off of work. If you need a work note please discuss this in advance with Dr. Holovac or Kendra Margulies (PA).