

Thomas F. Holovacs, MD

Patient Instructions for Surgery at MGH-West

If you are 65 or older you will need an EKG and lab work (CBC and BMP) that has been performed within 6 months of your surgery. If you have a cardiology or pulmonary specialist you will need cardiology clearance within 3 months of your surgery.

You must also have an anesthesiology phone screen prior to surgery. A member of the anesthesiology team will call you leading up to your surgery. It is not a specifically scheduled appointment

All shoulder replacement patients are required to have a **MRSA/MSSA nasal swab** prior to surgery. If positive this will require 5 days of treatment leading up to your surgery. We will help to schedule and coordinate testing.

PRE-SURGICAL MEDICATIONS

- Stop taking the following medications ONE WEEK prior to your scheduled surgery date
 - o **Ibuprofen**
 - o **Motrin**
 - o **Advil**
 - o **Aleve**
 - o **Naprosen/naproxen**
 - o **Aspirin** (unless otherwise instructed by your physician)
- If you were prescribed a **daily aspirin** by your PCP or cardiologist, **YOU MUST** consult with them before you stop taking Aspirin.
- If you are taking a **blood thinner (such as Coumadin, Heparin, Pradaxa, Plavix, Rivaroxaban)**
 - o **YOU MUST** consult with your prescribing doctor to manage this medication.
 - o Your prescribing doctor will be the one to decide how to manage it – NOT Dr. Holovacs.
 - o **IF** you take herbal supplements – you should stop taking them 10 days before your scheduled surgery date.

Please apply both **Hibiclens** (you can find this at CVS, walgreens... etc) AND over-the-counter **Benzoyl Peroxide cream** (clearasil) to the entire shoulder for 3 days leading up to your surgery.

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*** VERY IMPORTANT: If you have any signs of infection, cough/cold, fever, skin irritation, dental infection (...etc), PLEASE call the office to let us know. It's better that we know and address the issue with you before surgery rather than having to cancel your surgery last minute.***

PLEASE CONSULT OUR OFFICE IF:

- You are having any dental work done. Certain procedures may delay your surgery.
- If you are undergoing any other medical procedures/surgeries within 4 months of your scheduled shoulder surgery.

THE DAY OF YOUR SURGERY

- The morning of your surgery you should take a shower and use the Hibiclens (available at CVS, Walgreens, etc...) on your affected shoulder. If you are the first case you may take your shower the night before just prior to going to bed.
 - Please apply both Hibiclens (you can find this at CVS, walgreens... etc) AND over-the-counter Benzoyl Peroxide cream (clearasil) to the entire shoulder for 3 days leading up to your surgery.
- Remove all nail polish
- Do not apply any deodorant on the morning of your surgery.
- **DO NOT eat or drink ANYTHING after 10 pm the night before your scheduled surgery. NO chewing gum after midnight.**
- You **MUST** have someone accompany you and wait at the facility while you are in surgery so they can drive you home after you are discharged.
- While in surgery – the person accompanying you should go to the main office to pick up your post-op pain medication prescriptions. You **MUST** have the hard copy of the script in hand to get your medications.

ARRIVAL FOR SURGERY

- Our office will call 1-2 days before your surgery to confirm an arrival time.
- Your arrival time will not be confirmed prior to this call.

AFTER YOUR SURGERY

- **Managing pain**
 - If you had a nerve block – it will begin to wear off between 18-24 hours after surgery.
 - It is normal to have swelling and discomfort after your surgery.

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- Start your pain medications before you go to bed the night of your surgery. It is best to get ahead of the pain before the nerve block wears off.
- Take the first dose around 7 pm the night of your surgery. Continue to take medications as prescribed.
- Once the block wears off you will have a more clear idea of what level of pain needs to be managed over the next several days.
- Over the next several days try to decrease your dosage by spacing out the time in-between doses. We always recommend that you decrease your usage of pain medication as soon as the pain starts to improve.
- Please keep in mind that the pain medication may not completely mask the pain. **BE PATIENT.** Distract yourself. **DO NOT** stay in bed all day. **DO NOT TAKE MORE MEDICATION THAN PRESCRIBED.** If you have additional questions/concerns. Call the office to speak with the NP/PA.
- We provide Oxycodone for pain. This prescription should only last for 7 days. We typically do not refill the pain medication. Any discussion about additional pain medication requires an office visit. Prior to schedule this appointment please contact the PA to discuss. This is a firm policy in place in order to **KEEP YOU SAFE.**
- You may take Tylenol in addition to your pain medication.
- Common side effects : constipation, itching and nausea
 - To help avoid constipation – drink plenty of water in addition to over the counter stool softeners – Colace or Senekot if needed.
- **Sling**
 - Keep the sling on at all times unless instructed otherwise (see protocol). You do need to sleep in the sling. This is to protect your shoulder in the initial post-operative phase
- **Ice**
 - Keep the ice on your shoulder for the first 48 hours as much as possible. Change the ice in the machine frequently to keep circulating cold water.
 - Protect any skin in direct contact with the cold pads with a thin shirt or towel while icing.
 - We recommend an ice machine after surgery which is available to buy through MGH. Please see information on our website shoulderwork.com if you are interested.
- **Showering/Bandages**
 - 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 on the incision) should remain on the incision until they fall off on their own.
- **Driving**
 - Dr. Holovacs recommends that you **DO NOT** drive while in a sling

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- During this timeframe the pain is unpredictable. This puts you and other drivers at risk while you are on the road.
- **Aspirin**
 - Unless instructed otherwise – you will take 325 mg aspirin daily for 30 days. This is mainly for prevention of blood clots after surgery.
 - If you are on any of the following medications you will NOT need a daily Aspirin (unless told otherwise):
 - Plavix
 - Coumadin
 - Lovenox
- **Temperature**
 - For the first couple of days after your surgery you may find that you have a temperature. A fever of 100-101 in the first couple of days is completely normal. If your fever is higher than 101 or if it lasts after the first few days – call the office to make sure you don't have an infection.

POST-OPERATIVE APPOINTMENT

- Call Dr. Holovacs office (617-726-0298) to set up your post operative appointment before your surgery.
- This apt will be with the PA/NP working with Dr. Holovacs 7-10 days after your scheduled surgical date.

PHYSICAL THERAPY

- Your physical therapy can and should take place near to your home
- Your start date for physical therapy will differ depending on your procedure.
- For many of the procedures we suggest access to a pool (gym pool, YMCA...). This allows the arm to float in a passive, protected environment using buoyancy of the water to assist the arm for increased motion. All motion in the pool should be **PASSIVE**. This is meant to be **in addition** to physical therapy. You can get access to a pool independently if you are unable to do it through your PT office.

Important phone numbers

- Dr. Holovacs office: (617) 726-0298

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- *Hospital operator: (617) 726 – 2000 - If the office is closed and you are unable to reach someone in the office – call the hospital line and ask for the orthopedic resident on call to be paged.*

Return to work paperwork, school notes, FMLA, short term disability

Please provide this paperwork as soon as possible to make sure it is done in a timely manner, before your surgery. It often takes 7-10 days for turn-around time to please plan accordingly. Make an effort to fill out as much of the personal information (name, address, date of birth, employer...etc) as possible to make the process easier and faster for the practitioner filling out your paperwork.