Shoulder Pre-Operative Physical Therapy Visit

Purpose
The purpose of this physical therapy visit is to prepare you for shoulder surgery.

Goals
The goals of the visit are to:
1. Introduce you to the Rehab 3 facility and staff.
2. Provide a brief evaluation.
3. Teach you how to care for your shoulder after surgery.

Questions to ask your physician after surgery
1. Verify what type of surgery was performed
   - Subacromial Decompression (SAD)
   - Distal Clavicular Resection (DCR)
   - Small Rotator Cuff Repair (RTC repair)
   - Large Rotator Cuff Repair (RTC repair)
   - Anterior Shoulder Reconstruction (Bankart Surgery)
   - Bicep Tenodesis/ Labral Repair (SLAP)
   - Labral Debridement
   - Other: ________________
2. Verify your shoulder precautions prescribed by your doctor
   - Move arm as tolerated, letting pain be your guide.
   - Keep arm immobile in sling.
   - Other: ________________

Taking care of yourself after surgery
1. Precautions
   a. **SAD, DCR and Labral Debridement**: There are no specific precautions other than avoiding activities that aggravate your symptoms. You can move your arm as tolerated, letting pain be your guide. Avoid reaching overhead excessively, reaching behind the back, scrubbing, and lifting because they will likely aggravate your pain.
   b. **Rotator Cuff Repair, Bankart Surgery, Labral Repair, and Bicep Tenodesis**: You will be asked to wear a sling or abduction pillow during the day and at night while lying down. Your physician or therapist will let you know when you no longer need to immobilize your arm. Typically you will wear the sling for 3 to 4 weeks. Failure to follow this precaution can disrupt the stitches in your muscle/ tendon/ labrum and lead to a failed surgery.
2. **Pain and Edema Control:**
   a. To control pain it is necessary to minimize swelling. Try to ice 15-20 minutes approximately every 2 hours. When using ice, you should place a small barrier (pillowcase or towel) between the ice and your skin to protect the skin from damage. If you have been instructed to exercise your shoulder, it is best to ice after the exercise. It is also important to follow the physician’s instructions regarding medications.

3. **Positioning**
   a. **Sleeping Position:**
      i. Patients without a sling: When sleeping on your back, place a pillow under your head and one pillow under each arm (elbow, forearm, and hand should rest on the pillow). If you choose to sleep on your side, sleep with the surgical side up and rest your arm on a pillow (as if hugging the pillow). You may find it helpful to roll up a small hand towel and gently place it between your arm and the side of your body.
      ii. Patients with a sling: When sleeping on your back, place a pillow under your head and one pillow under each arm (elbow, forearm, and hand should rest on the pillow). We recommend that you do not sleep on your side at this time. If you are unable to sleep in bed try resting in the recliner with your arm supported.
   b. **Changing positions:** Be careful not to use your arm when moving around or trying to get out of bed.
   c. **Sitting Position:** Sit with a pillow under your arms to take the weight off your shoulder and neck.

4. **Home Exercise Program (See Separate Sheet)**
   a. It is important to perform all of your exercises as instructed to prevent loss of motion and decrease muscle stiffness.
   b. Exercises may be mildly uncomfortable, however should not cause significant pain. Stop any exercise that causes excessive or prolonged pain.
   c. Your therapist will progress your exercises when you have your post-op physical therapy visit.

5. **Skin Care**
   a. When your arm is immobilized heat and moisture can become trapped under your arm causing skin irritation or a rash. To help prevent this from happening be sure to keep this area clean and dry. To do this place a soft cloth under your arm and wear clothing that can be easily put on and taken off like a buttoned shirt or a tee shirt that has been cut in the front. To clean under your arm lean forward to let your arm dangle away from your body, not attempt to lift your arm.

**Post-surgical Rehabilitation**
You will return to physical therapy between one and three weeks after surgery based on your physician recommendation.

**Questions**
If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your physician or physical therapist. Our telephone number is (603) 749-6686. Your therapist’s name is: ___________________________.