



# **Post Operative Instructions: Clavicle Fracture ORIF**

---

## **ACTIVITY**

- Do not attempt to lift your arm or reach in any direction (forward, to the side, or behind you) until permitted by Dr. Gilmer.

---

## **SLING**

- Please wear the sling while sleeping.
- We would like you to remove the sling 2-3 times a day to bend your elbow and wrist (refer to next page). Please do not move your elbow away from your side.

---

## **DRESSING & INCISIONS**

- A small amount of red-tinged drainage on the dressing during the first 2 days is normal.
- Keep the dressing clean and dry; protect it while bathing or showering.
- You may remove the dressings after 4 days, leave the steri-strips in place. You may place Band-Aids over the incisions.
- Do not apply Bacitracin or other ointments.
- Avoid soaking in pools, lakes, hot tubs, or the ocean until sutures are removed and the incision is fully healed.

---

## **PAIN & INFLAMMATION**

### Ice

- Apply ice wrapped in a dry towel 20 minutes at a time, several times per day for the first week, then as needed.

### Swelling

- It is normal for your shoulder to be swollen from the fluid used during surgery. Your forearm and hand may become swollen in the days following surgery. Gravity pulls swelling down to your hand.

### Pain Medications

- Take your prescribed medications as directed.

#### Tylenol (Acetaminophen)

- First-line for pain.
- Take 1000 mg every 6-8 hours.
- Do not exceed 1000 mg per dose or 4000 mg per day (limit to 3000 mg/day if you have liver issues).
- Do not drink alcohol while taking Tylenol.

#### Oxycodone

- For moderate to severe breakthrough pain only.
- Use sparingly and wean off as soon as possible.

#### Common side effects include:

- Nausea: Take with food.
- Drowsiness: Do not drive or operate machinery.
- Itching: Benadryl may help.

- Constipation:
  - Use stool softeners (e.g., Senna-Docusate) or OTC options (Mineral Oil, Milk of Magnesia, etc).
  - Avoid bananas, rice, apples, toast, and yogurt (may worsen constipation).
  - Light walking helps stimulate bowel function.

Refills:

- If you think you will need a refill, you must request it during regular weekday office hours.

---

## EMERGENCIES

You must have someone stay with you during the first 48 hours after surgery.

Call the clinic or the on-call orthopedist if:

- Drainage soaks the dressing, increases, smells foul, or if incisions become red, warm, or very painful.
- You develop a fever  $>101.5^{\circ}\text{F}$  or chills.
- You experience leg or calf pain, swelling, or difficulty breathing.

---

## FOLLOW-UP CARE

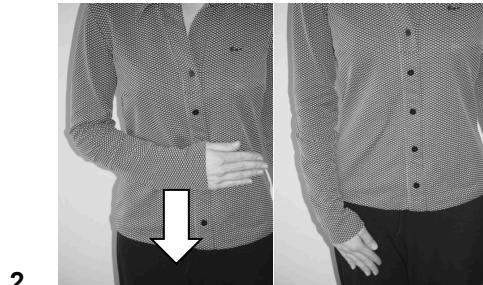
- Schedule a follow-up appointment at ~2 weeks postoperatively for a wound check, suture removal, and review of your surgery (if not already scheduled).

---

## EXERCISES

You may perform the following exercises (**10-15 reps each, 2-3 times daily**) out of the sling. It will help you to take your pain medication 20 to 30 minutes prior to the exercises:

1. **Elbow range of motion:** With your arm bent at the elbow and against your body as if it were still in the sling, bend and straighten your elbow as if you were brushing something off of the front of your pants.



3. **Grip strengthening:** With the arm in the sling, grip a rubber ball or old tennis ball. Hold for 5 seconds and release.
4. **Wrist rotation:** Turn your palm to face up toward the ceiling and hold for 5 - 10 seconds. Then turn the palm to face the floor and hold again. Bend your wrist
5. **Pendulum:** Lean forward and hang your arm down towards the floor. Trace small letters of the alphabet with your finger on the floor. The arm movements must be PASSIVE! (Do not use your muscles to lift/move the arm). Make the letters bigger daily by a small amount.