

## **Pectoralis Major Tendon Repair**

### ***What is the pectoralis major tendon?***

The pectoralis major muscle is the large muscle just in front of the chest wall. It works to push the arms in the front of the body, such as in a bench press maneuver. The muscle ruptures when the tendon that attaches to the bone pulls off.

### ***How do you repair the pectoralis major tendon?***

The pectoralis major tendon will be repaired through an incision at the front of your shoulder. Strong sutures will be woven through the end of the tendon and then tied down to the humerus.

### ***Length of Stay***

This is usually done as an outpatient surgery. You will be discharged home the same day. You will need to have someone to drive you home after you have been discharged.

### ***Anesthesia***

Patients usually have two types of anesthesia for this surgery. The first is general anesthesia, which means you are asleep. The second type of anesthesia is a nerve block. Your arm will be numb and will feel very strange. The nerve block will last about 12-14 hours. The anesthesiologist will speak to you on the day of surgery. The ultimate choice of anesthesia technique is up to you and your anesthesiologist.

### ***Incision***

You will have an incision across your shoulder. Once the incision has healed, it is usually very thin and not very noticeable.

### ***Dressings***

You will go home with a waterproof tegaderm dressing. You may shower after surgery as long as the TEGADERM dressing is intact. If the tegaderm begins to fall off it may be removed after 3 days. The actual skin incision CANNOT get wet prior to 3 days. After the dressings are removed, simply allow the water to wash over the site and then pat dry. Do not rub the incisions. Make sure your axilla (armpit) is completely dry after showering.

### ***Pain***

You will have pain medication prescribed for you prior to discharge. After the nerve block wears off you will have discomfort. Most of the pain is related to your very swollen shoulder. That swelling will resolve in 24-48 hours. It is important to stay on top of the pain medication. Most patients receive Toradol, which is a strong anti-inflammatory. Begin taking this medication when you get home. The

Narcotic you are prescribed should be used as a rescue medication as needed. For the first 2 days it is advised that you take 1 of these pills around the clock to stay on top of the pain. If it is too strong, you can take Extra strength Tylenol in its place.

### ***Sling***

Your arm will be placed in a sling prior to leaving the operating room. You are to remain in your sling 24 hours a day. This includes sleeping in your sling. Sling use is for 6 weeks. This aids in healing. You can remove the sling to take showers and get dressed. Allow the operative arm to dangle at the side and avoid active lifting of the arm.

### ***Post Op Ice Therapy***

If you can obtain an Ice Machine Unit these are very helpful. **Please be sure to bring it in with you on the day of surgery.** Plan to use ice on the shoulder intermittently at least for the first 48 hours after surgery. You should use ice therapy on the shoulder for 15-minute increments throughout the day. Using ice therapy helps decrease pain and swelling. You can use it daily as needed throughout your recovery period.

### ***Physical Therapy***

For the first six weeks of recovery you will do very gentle stretching at home. The second 6 weeks of recovery you will go to formal physical therapy and continue with a home exercise program.

### ***Restrictions***

Recovery from a pectoralis major tendon repair is three months. During that time you will have restrictions on the use of your operative arm.

**Day of surgery to 6 weeks:** remain in sling, no use of arm, out of work, no driving

**Months 1.5-3:** no lifting and carrying anything greater than 10 lbs  
No bench press or push ups for 5 months after surgery.

### ***Driving***

You are not allowed to drive until you are out of the sling and you feel safe. This is usually about 4- 6 weeks post op.

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### ***Follow Up Appt***

You should have had your follow up appointment made at the time of your preoperative appointment. You should be seen at around 10-14 days.

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