

## **Reverse Shoulder Arthroplasty**

### ***What is a Reverse Shoulder Arthroplasty?***

A reverse shoulder arthroplasty (shoulder replacement) is a surgical procedure in which parts of an arthritic joint are replaced with a prosthesis or artificial parts. The normal shoulder is a ball and socket joint. The ball is called the humeral head and the socket is called the glenoid. The reverse ball and socket replacement changes the orientation of the shoulder so that the normal socket (glenoid) now is replaced with an artificial ball, and the normal ball (humeral head) is replaced with an implant that has a socket into which the artificial ball rests.

### ***How do you replace the shoulder?***

The prosthesis will be placed through an incision down the front of the shoulder. The ball component is anchored in place with screws while the socket will be cemented in the humeral shaft.

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

This is usually done as an outpatient surgery. 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 12-24 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 down the front of your shoulder. After 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 2 weeks. 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 2 weeks after surgery, you will perform gentle range of motion exercises for your elbow, wrist, and hand. After 2 weeks you will begin shoulder exercises and gentle stretching at home. The second 6 weeks of recovery you will go to begin strengthening and actively lifting the arm and continue with a home exercise program. Many patients do very well with a home exercise program but going to formal physical therapy is an option. You may also use the MyHealthTrack app on your phone for the entire rehabilitation program.

## ***Blood Thinners***

After surgery enteric coated Aspirin will be prescribed for 4 weeks. This is to prevent blood clots. Discuss with DR Acevedo if you have a sensitivity to Aspirin.

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## ***Restrictions***

Recovery from a reverse shoulder replacement is around three months. During that time you will have restrictions on the use of your operative arm. You may drive when you feel that you can properly control a car and you are **NOT** taking narcotic pain medication.

**Day of surgery to Week 6:** no closing doors, no reaching behind your back, no pushing up from a chair/bed, and no repetitive movements.

## ***In the Future***

*Procedures-* After a shoulder replacement if you are going to have an invasive procedure you will need to get a prescription for antibiotics beforehand for the first year after your surgery. Invasive procedure include any dental work (including cleanings), urine or bladder procedures. Please let us and your other doctor know that you have a joint replacement and need antibiotics before the procedure.

*Activities:* In general, you should avoid lifting over 25 lbs with the operative arm and no more than 50lbs if using both arms at the same time. Overhead lifting is not recommended after a reverse shoulder replacement. Many patients resume an active lifestyle and popular activities include swimming, golfing, cycling, and light weight training.

## ***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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