



CHRISTOPHER A. ARNOLD M.D. • *ARTHROSCOPIC & RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY OF THE SHOULDER, KNEE & HIP*

Dear Sir or Madam:

Thank you for choosing Dr. Arnold and his staff to assist you with your surgical needs. We make it our goal to help you with any situation you might have, and to make your experience with surgery a good one. This packet has been written to familiarize you with your surgery. Please read all of the information in your surgery packet very carefully BEFORE your surgery date. Also, it is extremely important that you read all of your pre-op surgery instructions as soon as you can. These instructions are meant to help you get through the process to know exactly what to do and where to go.

Please be aware that although we try to give you an idea of surgical expectations, the information included in this packet is a general idea. Each one of our patients is different, as are their pre and post-operative experiences. Even though you may use this information as a guide, the instructions that you receive throughout your post-operative appointments are the instructions to follow.

We are here to assist you in every way possible that we can. If you have any questions, comments, or problems please contact us.

Sincerely,

*The Staff of Arnold
Orthopaedics &
Sports Medicine*



Preparing For Surgery

Your surgery will be scheduled at the earliest convenient date that is available to you. Dr. Arnold will discuss with you the risks and benefits involved with the surgery.

STARTING NOW:

- **STOP SMOKING:** smoking reduces circulation to the skin and impedes healing
- **TAKE MULTIVITAMINS:** Start taking multivitamins daily to improve your general health once you have scheduled your surgery
- **TAKE VITAMIN C:** Start taking 500 mg of Vitamin C twice daily to promote healing
- **LIMIT VITAMIN E:** Limit your intake of Vitamin E to less than 400 iu per day.
- **PRE-ADMIT** to the facility:

PRE-ADMISSION

You will need to Pre-Admit to the facility in which you are having your procedure done. Sometimes this takes a phone call and other times it may mean an extended visit.

The Facilities include:

- **Physician's Specialty Hospital – Fayetteville, AR**
479-571-7882: The center will contact you and pre-admit over the telephone. You may call with any questions.
- **Washington Regional Medical Center – Fayetteville, AR**
479-463-5982: call the number provided to schedule this. Begin the admissions process at the admissions desk. This will take one to two hours depending on the tests needed.
- **North Hills Surgery Center – Fayetteville, AR**
479-713-6100: The center will contact you and pre-admit over the telephone. You may call with any questions.

It is up to you to contact the facility to fulfill the pre-admission process.



THE WEEK BEFORE SURGERY

- **PRESCRIPTIONS:** You will receive your prescriptions for your post-operative medications on the day of the surgery at the surgery center.
- **PRE-OPERATIVE APPOINTMENTS:** You may have a pre-operative appointment made for before your surgery. If you do not keep your appointment then your procedure will be delayed. You should use this appointment to ask any questions that you may have.
- **DO NOT TAKE ASPRIN, ARTHRITIS MEDICATIONS, OR BLOOD THINNERS.** Stop taking medications containing aspirin, anti-inflammatory medicines, or blood thinner medicines such as coumadin one week before surgery. (If aspirin or other blood thinner has been prescribed by another physician, make sure and check with them before discontinuing). Such drugs can cause bleeding problems during and after surgery. Instead, use medications containing acetaminophen (Tylenol)
- **CLEANSING:** The night before surgery, shower and wash the surgical areas with an antibacterial soap (i.e. Dial). Do NOT shave the operative area for at least one week before the surgery.
- **EATING AND DRINKING:** Do not eat or drink anything after 12:00 midnight. This includes water.
- **SKIN ABNORMALITIES:** Prior to your surgery, you should absolutely avoid any places in which you could receive scratches or insect bites to your operative area. If you have any blemishes, scratches, or insect bites in the vicinity of the operative site your procedure will have to be postponed until the area is completely clear.
- **MEDICAL CLEARANCE:** You may be asked to have a medical doctor clear you for your surgery. If nothing has been said to you about medical clearance then you do not have to see your medical doctor. However, in these instances where you need clearance, you should have your medical doctor send our office a note stating that you are approved from a medical standpoint. This note can be faxed, mailed, or you may bring it to our office. *We must have this note prior to your procedure.*



THE MORNING OF SURGERY

- **SPECIAL INFORMATION:** DO NOT eat or drink anything!!! If you take a daily heart or blood pressure medication you may take it with a sip of water in the early morning. Otherwise, no medicine may be taken that morning. Please clarify with the clinic nurse if you have any questions.
- **ORAL HYGIENE:** You may brush your teeth but do not swallow the water.
- **CLEANSING:** Shower and wash the surgical areas again with your normal soap. Do not put on lotion, make-up, powder, or any type of cosmetic agent.
- **CLOTHING:** Wear only comfortable, loose-fitting clothing. Remove all jewelry. Please do not bring valuables with you.
- **CHECK IN:** You will need to be at your surgical facility two hours before your scheduled surgical time, unless the surgical center informs you otherwise. You may go by their time if it is different. A parent or legal guardian must accompany patients less than 18 years old.

GOING TO SURGERY

THE OPERATING SUITE

- Going to the operating room is not a normal experience for most of us. Dr. Arnold and all off the professional staff caring for you recognize the natural anxiety with which most patients approach this step.
- Your surgery will be performed in a state-of-the-art operating room. Specialists using modern equipment and techniques will attend to you. The team includes a board-certified anesthesiologist or a CRNA (certified registered nurse anesthetist), a trained operating room nurse and a registered nurse in charge of the operating room.



The Operating Suite (continued)

- When you arrive at the center, you will be escorted to the surgery suite. You will be asked to change into a hospital gown.
- The anesthesiologist will meet with you before you enter the operating suite. There will be time for last minute questions.
- Once you enter the operating suite, the staff will do everything they can to make you feel secure. To ensure your safety, our staff will connect you to monitoring devices. Medicines that will make you drowsy will flow through the intravenous tubing into a vein in your arm.

THE RECOVERY ROOM

- When your surgery has been completed and your dressings are in place, you will be moved to the recovery room. You will be connected to monitoring equipment constantly. During this period, a fully trained recovery room nurse will take care of you and remain with you at all times. The registered nurses in the recovery room are specially certified for advanced cardiac life support.
- Your stay in the recovery room will last from 30 minutes to 3 hours, depending on how soon you are ready to leave. Most patients are fully awake within 30-60 minutes after surgery but may not remember much about their stay in the recovery room.

POST-SURGERY ARRANGEMENTS

- You must arrange for someone to bring you to and drive you home from the surgery center. Someone should remain with you the first night after the surgery because you have been sedated.



POST OPERATIVELY

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Pain and swelling are to be expected. At times the entire extremity that has been operated on may hurt and be swollen. This takes time for these symptoms to resolve. You should take your pain medicine as instructed. The pain medicine is to be used on an as needed basis, therefore take the medication only as you need to.
- Ice should be used for the first 48-72 hours after surgery. Keep the leg elevated with the ice pack on. You may use the ice pack longer if necessary. Do NOT place the ice directly in contact with the skin
- You may feel nauseated after your surgery. Begin your diet with clear liquids such as 7-up for a few hours. If you do not feel nauseated you may progress to soft bland foods, and continue to progress your diet, as you feel comfortable. You may also take the medication provided for nausea, as you need to.
- You will have a dressing on your knee when you wake up from surgery. You may reinforce this dressing for the first two days after surgery. DO NOT change the gauze on the dressing before 48 hours. Be sure to keep the dressing clean and dry. After two days, you may remove the dressing and cover the incision sites with band-aids. If you have an incision (i.e. ACL reconstruction), clean the wound with betadine and cover the incision with 4x4 gauze. Keep the incision covered until you return to our office. Do not apply medicated ointment such as Neosporin to the sites.
- The day after your surgery begin taking Aspirin 325 mg once a day for seven to fourteen days unless you have an ulcer or an allergy to aspirin.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- If you have swelling specifically to the calf and ankle, or if you have calf pain or redness. Please notify the clinic immediately.
- If you have a fever greater than 101 degrees or begin having chills please notify the clinic immediately.



What to Watch For (continued)

- If you notice excessive bleeding, foul drainage, or excessive redness at your incision site, call the clinic immediately
- If you have any questions of unusual circumstances you may call the clinic to ask questions or notify to changes.

WHAT TO DO AFTERWARDS

- You will have elastic stockings (TED hose) on both legs when you leave the hospital. If you do not have them on your operated leg, you should put the hose on that leg when you get home. You make take these off when you are up and around more than you are down at rest.
- Return to the clinic 7 to 10 days after the surgery for your post-operative appointment with one of Dr. Arnold's nursing staff.
- If you need refills of your medicines you must call the clinic between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and between 8 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. on Fridays - although we will make every effort to expedite requests, all medication refills may take up to 48 hours to refill.
- Alcohol dilates the blood vessels and could increase postoperative bleeding. Please do not drink until you have stopped taking the prescription pain pills, as the combination of pain pills and alcohol can be dangerous.
- You will begin your physical therapy once you return for your post-operative visit. The exercises that you were given pre-operatively should be done the first week as tolerated. These include quad sets, leg raises, and the flexion of your ankle at least twice a day.
- You should follow all instructions that you receive as you proceed with your post-operative visits.
- All other questions should be directed to the clinic during business hours Monday through Friday. For emergencies the telephones are answered 24 hours a day, and there is always a physician on call.



Please be aware that everybody has a different post-operative experience concerning pain control, and although you may have a similar surgical procedure as someone that you know, your post-operative experience can be completely different. You will be given a prescription pain medicine following your surgery. Your pain medications are to be used if needed, and although this list is not all-inclusive, we want you to be aware of some certain items of caution with pain (narcotic) medications.

PRESCRIPTION PAIN MEDICATIONS:

- *Pain Medications may make you sick at your stomach.* Taking your pain medicine with food will usually help this, avoid taking medications on an empty stomach. You may use over the counter Dramamine ½ tablet, 30 minutes before taking your pain medicine if you are prone to nausea. If you become nauseated you may use the prescription nausea medicine as needed.
- *Pain Medications may make you sleepy or lightheaded.* DO NOT drive a car or operate machinery.
- *Most pain medications contain Tylenol (acetaminophen).* Do Not take additional Tylenol in this case.
- *Ask about taking an anti-inflammatory medication.* Medications such as Advil or Aleve can assist in decreasing the swelling to the surgical site. Controlling the inflammation will often assist with pain and the amount of narcotic medicine you may have to take. Occasionally, there are surgeries where Dr. Arnold may not want you to take these medications, therefore ask before adding these to your regime.
- *Pain medicines may constipate you.* Increase your fiber intake (breads, cereals, and fruits such as apples or prunes) while taking your pain medications. If you are prone to constipation then these medications may aggravate this and it is a good idea to take an over the counter stool softener while you are on your medication. If you battle constipation on a regular basis then you may also want to have the laxative that you prefer on hand just in case.
- *Read the label on the pain medication carefully.* The label on the medication may read, “Take 1 or 2 as needed every 4 hours for pain.” This means that you will have to judge how bad you are hurting. If you are really uncomfortable take the 2 pills. If you are unsure how much medication you need or if you are just beginning to hurt take the 1 pill. If you have no relief in 30-45 minutes then take the 2nd pill. For the first 24-48 hours most people take the pain medication on a scheduled basis. It is important to stay ahead of your pain. If you wait to take you pain medication until the pain is so bad that you cannot stand it, then pain relief can be difficult to obtain.
- *Check with your pharmacist or doctor before taking other pain medicines with you pain medications.*



Insurance Questions

We often get asked questions concerning insurance and payment for services rendered. Our staff will be happy to assist in the insurance process as much as we can. We make every effort to accommodate your needs in an appropriate manner, but it is imperative that you provide us with all current insurance information.

We will take care of all pre-certifications that may be required with your insurance policy. However, any questions with your benefits or for pre-existing conditions should be resolved between you and your insurance company. We highly recommend that you make contact with your insurance company prior to your surgery to verify your coverage and benefits.

You are responsible for your portion of your payments prior to your procedure. If you are unable to pay your portion in full, it is your responsibility to ensure that a payment plan is created with you. We will be happy to provide you with an estimated out-of-pocket responsibility.

We make every effort to confirm all network benefits, including facilities; however, it is your ultimate responsibility to ensure that the facility that your procedure is being performed at is within your network.

All surgery facilities that Dr. Arnold performs procedures at are separate entities from us. If you have questions concerning payments and /or benefits regarding those facilities, please direct your questions to those individual facilities.

Physician's Surgery Center in Fayetteville is a surgery center that Dr. Arnold has an ownership interest in. If you have any questions regarding this, including treatment at this or other facilities, please contact our office.

If you have any further questions or comments please contact our office



Post-Operative Knee Arthroscopy Instructions

- Unless directly instructed not to, you may bear weight as tolerated on your affected knee. You may feel dizzy; therefore, caution is urged when ambulating.
- Do not drive or operate machinery until your physician clears you and you are off narcotics
- The evening of surgery begin your diet with 7-up or clear liquids for 3-4 hours. You may progress your diet to soft foods if you are not nauseous. If you have nausea, remain taking fluids only until the nausea subsides.
- Reinforce your dressing with gauze if needed for 2 days. At any time, if the dressing feels too tight, you may loosen the dressing as needed.
- After two days remove the dressing and cover the arthroscopy wounds with Band-Aids if needed. If you have an incision you should clean the wound with betadine or hydrogen peroxide and cover the wound with 4x4 gauze. You should not get the wound wet (i.e. shower) until 48 hours after the staples/sutures are removed, otherwise you may resume showering if there are no sutures or staples when the incisions are scabbed over. *Do NOT Bathe or submerge the knee in water. Do not apply medicated ointment.*
- Keep the leg elevated with an ice pack to the knee intermittently for 24-48 hours after the surgery. You may use the ice pack longer if necessary.
- You should have your elastic stockings (TED hose) on **both** legs; you may remove these when you are up and around more than you are down at rest.
- Pain and swelling are to be expected, the more active you are the worse it will be.
- Unless you have been instructed not to do so, you will need to take one Aspirin (325 mg) a day for 7 days after surgery.
- The day after your surgery, begin your exercises (quad sets, ankle pumps) as instructed to do so.
- Return to the office one week after the surgery for your post-op check.
- If you have any fever greater than 101°, begin having chills, increasing pain, excessive bleeding, foul drainage, or excessive redness call Dr. Arnold's office (479-751-3860).



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SKIN ABNORMALITIES

DO NOT get any skin abnormalities in the area of your surgery. If you experience ANY skin abnormalities including: insect bites, blemishes, pimples, rashes, scratches, etc in the area of your surgery (i.e. knee, shoulder) you must let our office know. Even if these blemishes are normal for you, you must let us see them before your surgery. If we do not see these, then there is a good chance that your surgery would be postponed until the area is completely clear. Any blemish could potentially increase the risk of infection associated with surgery and it is our desire to lessen all risks that come with a surgical procedure. If you have any questions, please let us know.

If you are in need of any further information, please access our web site:

www.arnoldknee.com

which has more patient education and overall information for you to look at