

REHABILITATION PROGRAM FOR ROTATOR CUFF & SCAPULAR MUSCLES FOLLOWING A ROTATOR CUFF REPAIR

Before Your Surgery:

You can prepare your home so that things are easier to do after your surgery:

- Make sure you have a few extra pillows. You will need these to support your shoulder when sleeping on your back or unoperated side.
- Prepare and freeze meals in advance, purchase easy to prepare meals or frozen dinners that are easy to open.
- Ask your friends and family for assistance with cleaning and meal preparation.
- A reusable hot/cold pack is helpful for any swelling or tense muscles that you may experience after surgery.
- A “reacher” can help picking things up from the floor and getting hard to reach items. Reachers are available at the hospital gift shop or medical supply stores.
- An electric can opener and an electric toothbrush may be helpful (especially if you are having surgery on your dominant arm).
- Move your nightstand close to your unoperated side. Make sure you can easily reach the lamp and are able to turn it on with your unoperated arm.

After Your Surgery:

- **Sleeping** – You should sleep on your back or unoperated side. When sleeping on your back, support your operated shoulder by placing a pillow underneath. When sleeping on your side, a pillow can be placed across your chest to support your operated arm. You may be more comfortable sleeping in a sitting position. Your surgeon will likely request that you sleep with your sling on.
- **Bathing** – A non-slip mat in your shower/bath tub will improve safety. Your arm can hang gently at your side while bathing. Don’t forget to wash underneath your operated arm. You can increase your independence with bathing by using a long-handled sponge to wash your back and legs using your unoperated arm. You may cover your bandage with plastic while showering. Your nurse will speak to you regarding care of your incision and bandage.
- **Dressing** – Loose fitting clothing and button-up shirts are ideal. You may do up/undo buttons using your unoperated arms. Dress your operated arm first, then your unoperated side. When undressing, begin with your unoperated arm, then your operated arm. Bras should be fastened in front, turned to the back using your unoperated arm and then the straps pulled up last. Your sling should be worn over your clothes. If you wear shoes with laces, you may want to consider elastic shoelaces or slip-on shoes – it is difficult to tie laces with one hand.