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**Pain Management Guidelines for Maximal Control of Early Post-Operative Pain**

**Pain Medication**

Try to minimise the amount of strong pain medication and be accepting of some manageable pain, which will gradually decrease. Paracetamol in normal doses is a safe medication, so 2 pills up to 4 times daily over the first few days is reasonable. Take the stronger medication only if and when required.

For severe pain, the maximum for a normal adult, alternate 2 Paracetamol (total 1000mg, or 1g) and 2 of the stronger medications (Codeine or Tramadol) every three hours.

This means, for example, that you may be taking 1000mg (1g) Paracetamol, followed three hours later by 2 Tramadol (totalling 100mg), and repeating this sequence. This means that you don’t take either of these medications more than six hourly but get something every three hours. Try to only do this for a few days.

**Ice**

Apply ice for 10 – 15 minutes every two hours over the painful regions.

**Further Strategies**

Generally, I don’t prescribe antiinflammatories as a routine post-operative medication; if you tolerate these and the other strategies are not helping, then a short course of these in addition may also be useful.

If you are wearing a sling or a brace, this can be loosened with the limb supported on pillows to rest in a more relaxed position, unless otherwise advised.

**Nausea or Malaise**

For general symptoms of nausea or malaise, see your doctor. If there is any concern over the wound or infection, then contact our office or seek after hours medical review if required.

**Sling**

If you find that your arm is more comfortable out of the sling, if there is pain in the elbow for example, you may carefully loosen the sling while sitting in a chair with your arm supported on pillows and let the elbow extend into a more relaxed resting position. You should not attempt to move your arm outwards or stress the shoulder.

After a rotator cuff repair it is important you wear the bolster and sling/sling at all times, except for dressing, showering or doing your exercises. Your physiotherapist will show you how you can rest with elbow in a more relaxed resting position in lying and well supported on a pillow. If advised that this is appropriate, you could rest for up to 5-10 minutes 2-3 times per day in this position.

**Guidelines for Dressings**

If Mefix tape has been applied to the wounds, leave it on until clinic, or if it starts to lift off it can be removed at 10-14 days post surgery.

If an opsite (big ‘bandaid’ with clear margins) has been applied, remove that approximately 3 days post surgery. Leave the Mefix alone.

Unless otherwise instructed, you can wash/shower and get the Mefix wet and pat it dry but don’t go in spa pools/swimming etc.

**Specific Advice**

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