

Bathing, Dressing, Exercising and Sleeping After Shoulder Surgery

After your surgery, your arm will be placed in an immobilizer or sling. Only take the immobilizer or sling off for bathing, dressing and performing arm exercises, unless otherwise directed by your surgeon.

Place pillows under the involved arm while taking the immobilizer or sling on and off to avoid movement of the involved arm.

Bathing and dressing

- Bathe or dress involved arm by sitting at the side of the bed with pillows under the involved arm for support. Use pendulum (Codman's) position if allowed by physician.



Codman's position

- Use the non-involved arm or a helper to assist with dressing the involved arm. Dress the involved arm first.
- During bathing and dressing you should have **no** active movement of the involved arm unless otherwise directed by your physician.

Sleeping

- Place a pillow behind the involved shoulder for comfort and to keep the shoulder in the neutral position during sleep.
- Some people find it more comfortable to sleep in a recliner to keep the shoulder in a neutral position.

Exercise and ice

- Exercise as instructed by your therapist.
- Exercise will minimize adhesions and scar formation.
- Exercise maintains range of motion and minimizes muscle wasting in noninvolved joints.
- Apply ice to the involved shoulder for 15 to 20 minutes immediately after exercising and at least 20 minutes every two hours.