

Arthroscopic Capsular Release of the Shoulder

What is an arthroscopic capsular release of the shoulder?

Arthroscopic surgery is an operation in which a camera (arthroscope) is used to evaluate the inside of your shoulder. If there are any abnormalities inside the shoulder such as arthritis, bone spurs or a tear, they can be seen very well through the camera. A capsular release involves removing any adhesions or scar tissue within the shoulder joint that is limiting motion. This may also involve removal of bone spurs and the release of tight tissues.

Length of Stay

This is same day surgery. You will need to have someone who can take you home.

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 ultimate choice of anesthesia technique is up to you and your anesthesiologist.

Incisions

You will have a few small incisions around your shoulder. They will only be about 1 cm long.

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.

Sling

Your arm will be placed in a sling prior to leaving the operating room. The sling should only be worn while your arm is still numb from the nerve block. The sling should **NOT** be worn beyond the first day after surgery. You are not permitted to drive in a sling.

Dressings

You will go home with dressings that may be removed 3 days after your surgery. There will be small black sutures (stitches) that will be taken out at your first postoperative appointment approximately 2 weeks after your surgery.

Physical Therapy

Physical therapy is an essential part of the successful recovery after a capsular release. You will be given a home exercise program to start immediately after surgery. You will also be asked to make a physical therapy appointment to be seen within 48 hours of surgery so the physical therapist can start the exercise program with you immediately. You will need to set up a physical therapy appointment for 5 visits per week for the 2 weeks immediately following your surgery. THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR YOUR SUCCESSFUL RECOVERY.