

**These rotator cuff surgery recovery tips can help ensure that you heal properly, so you can resume participating in sports and other physical activities.**

# TIP OF THE MONTH



### **1. Carry Out**

Following surgery, you'll be scheduled to see a physical therapist, who will give you exercises to do at home — as well as in the office. Be an active participant and faithfully carry out all of your exercises, even the ones that seem simple.

Attending all sessions with your therapist as part of your rehab program and doing the exercises at home is crucial to a successful recovery.

### **2. Be at ease**

Rest is key to recuperation, so try to stay as comfortable as possible. Use an ice pack (or bag of frozen peas wrapped in a light cloth) to help reduce inflammation during the first three to five days after surgery. After that period, heat can provide some re-

lief for pain and stiffness. Take medication as directed. Anti-inflammatories also help you successfully complete your physical therapy exercises.

### **3. Sleep smart**

Sleeping in a somewhat upright position is often most comfortable following rotator cuff surgery and has the added benefit of helping you avoid the extra pressure on your shoulder that can result when lying flat. Use pillows to help prop you up, or place something under the mattress to raise it slightly. Some people find sleeping in a recliner or wide armchair is a good solution.

### **4. Be mindful**

Certain movements aren't conducive to

healing from rotator cuff surgery. These include lifting heavy objects, putting weight on your shoulders, reaching behind your body, and raising your arm overhead. Moving your arm laterally — out to the side — can also interfere with healing. Wearing a sling can help discourage you from making these motions inadvertently.

### **5. See it through**

As you begin to feel better, it's tempting to start challenging your shoulder with sports play or gym exercises. Don't "test" your arm until your therapists and doctors give you the go-ahead. Doing too much too soon is likely going to cause re-injury and set your recovery back.