

# Opioid-Free Post-Op Plan For: Arm Surgery

Ask your surgeon what to expect: Typical Discomfort Duration: \_\_\_\_\_ Peak: Day \_\_\_\_\_

Expected return to normal activities: \_\_\_\_\_

“Magnesium, diphenhydramine, ibuprofen, acetaminophen, melatonin, tryptophan, ice, and vibration are ok for you with this procedure.”

Dr. \_\_\_\_\_

- 1) When scheduling: Ask if long-acting numbing medicines are used or an option for your surgery.
- 2) Two Weeks Before Surgery: stretch neck muscles, strengthen rotator cuff. Practice relaxation.
- 3) One Week Before Surgery: download the What Works for Pain workbook.
  - a. Make a specific plan in the “Brain-Body” page with SPECIFIC options for each pain-brain neurotransmitter type.
  - b. Make a plan for physical solutions - For arm surgery, VibraCool easy fit with extra ice packs or heat packs for neck pain, or VibraCool Pro Upper Extremity.
  - c. Get any needed brain or physical materials: magazines, playdoh, pillows, etc.
  - d. Practice relaxation, or find a video online if you’re anxious.
  - e. Have someone make an “emergency treat” wrapped food, gift, letter, playlist, or other surprise, one for day of, and at least one for backup.
- 4) 3 days pre-surgery: consider magnesium, get over the counter medications, calculate doses:
  - a. Acetaminophen or ibuprofen per your doctor, or see the WWFP book
  - b. Have sleep supplements available if needed. Sleep is medicine!
  - c. Clear pathways around the house for walking, free up bedside table space.
- 5) After surgery:
  - a. You really do HAVE this! You’re prepared, and you have all the resources you need.
  - b. Physical solutions: Use ice and vibration [VibraCool](#) Extended Unit for 20 minutes for more intense relief directly on the skin as close as possible to where the bandages end, or directly on the incision once healed. You can use the ice as often as every 2 hours, vibration alone as long as you want. For sore shoulder or neck muscles, try ice or heat and vibration. [VibraCool.com](#)
  - c. For moderate discomfort, go to your fun/friend brain-body list for ideas.
  - d. While waiting for ibuprofen or acetaminophen to kick in....
    - i. Intense: Count the number of letters in a sentence with holes
    - ii. Put on StoPain Menthol 10%
    - iii. Trace a finger up and down the other hand, breathing in as you go up
    - iv. Emergency treat time
- 6) Sleep = pain management. See the WWFP list of options to help with sleep. Don’t try them all at once, experiment and keep track!