

Contact Us



(630) 646-7000



AhsanMD.com



@zahabahsanMD



Endeavor Health Medical Group
3329 75th Street
Woodridge, IL 60517

ZAHAB S. AHSAN MD

ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY & SPORTS MEDICINE

Photo by Wara A. Imam, DO



Endeavor
HealthSM

[illegible]

When can I return to work?

Following surgery, you are not permitted to drive while on narcotic pain medication, or if restricted by the brace/sling. Typical time ranges for return to driving are from ~2 weeks for shoulder surgery, and 2-4 weeks for right knee or lower extremity surgery. If you had left lower extremity surgery, you are permitted to drive after 1-2 weeks. Our office will work with you to help facilitate work accommodations.

When do I need to call the medical team?

Please call our office at (630) 646-7000 if you are experiencing any of the following:

- Fever (101.5 or greater), chills, or sweats
- Excessive bleeding (requiring changing the dressing twice within 12 hours)
- Foul odor, wound discharge/drainage, excessive redness
- Excruciating pain
- Calf pain, or significant calf swelling

In an emergency, or if immediate attention is required—please call 911.

For all non-emergency questions please utilize Epic MyChart for communication with our team.

Table of Contents

Letter from Our Surgeon	4
Important Contact Information	5
Your Medical Team	6
Surgical Details	11
Physical Therapy	15
Diet	19
Anesthesia	21
Important Notes	22
Frequently Asked Questions	24
Free Notes	30



What positions can I sleep in?

You may sleep on your back or in an upright / reclined position with your extremity in the brace or sling. Most patients find it more comfortable to sleep in a recliner after shoulder surgery if available. We recommend discontinuing sleeping in the knee brace after the first post-surgical visit, please confirm with us at your follow-up appointment.

What if I am having problems sleeping?

Make sure that your pain is well-controlled throughout the day. You may try over-the-counter sleep medications by consulting your pharmacist/primary care doctor.

When can I restart my home medications?

It is common to stop medications prior to surgery. Please check with your primary care physician. Most medications can be started the day after surgery.

How long will I be on narcotic medication?

You are encouraged to discontinue the narcotic pain medication based on your pain level following surgery. Most patients discontinue pain medication within one week following surgery—when they are no longer experiencing moderate pain levels.

Any tips for pain management?

Take your medication as prescribed and expect to use it less after the first week. Use cold therapy/ice units (please inquire from our team if not obtained at time of surgery scheduling) to help reduce discomfort. Avoid alcoholic beverages, and notify our office if pain is not well-controlled.



How long will rehab take after surgery?

Physical therapy is a crucial part of your recovery. You will have regularly scheduled postoperative appointments to help determine the length of time in rehabilitation. Most surgical cases will require a minimum of four months of physical therapy. Physical therapy sessions are 1 hour in length and are typically scheduled 2-3 times per week.

Will I have bruising after surgery?

It is normal to have some degree of bruising after surgery. Bruising and redness around the surgical incision is normal and will resolve over 2-4 weeks following the surgery.

When can I shower?

Following surgery, you may shower as soon as the first day after surgery. We encourage you to apply a layer of protection (such as Saran wrap) over the waterproof dressings covering the surgical site(s). After the first post-surgical appointment (typically 1 week), you will be allowed to shower without covering the surgical site. Please do not remove the Tegaderm dressing or Steri strips prior to the first post-surgical visit.

Please avoid submerging the surgical site underwater (bath or hot tub) for 6 weeks after the surgical procedure to avoid risk of infection.

From Our Surgeon

Dear Valued Patient,

Thank you for entrusting me with your care.

Providing an excellent and unparalleled surgical experience for you is of the utmost importance to me. Please use this handbook as a guide for your upcoming procedure, I believe you will find this helpful as you begin your recovery.

Our team is there to support your progression and return to a healthy and active lifestyle.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call (630) 646 – 7000 or contact us via Epic MyChart.

Sincerely,



Zahab S. Ahsan, MD
Orthopaedic Surgery & Sports Medicine



Castle Connolly Top Doctors is an entirely merit-based process that is considered by physicians to be the only legitimate recognized category of excellence in American Medicine.

Dr. Zahab Ahsan was selected for this recognition.



Important Contact Information

Keep this information close as you might need these numbers during recovery.

Orthopedic Surgery Office

(630) 646-7000.

Surgery Scheduling

(630) 646-7000, option 3.

Clinical Team

Urgent needs: (630) 646-7000.

Non-urgent needs: connect via Epic MyChart.

Billing

(630) 432-6144.

Medical Record Requests

(630) 527-3080.

Durable Medical Equipment (DME)

(312) 350-7710.

Evenings, Nights, & Weekends

(630) 646-7000 to page on-call physician.

*In cases of emergencies go to Edward Hospital Emergency Room or the local ER.

Any tips for pain management?

Plan to take Tylenol (Acetaminophen) around the clock (500-1000 mg every 6 hours) initially as a baseline pain medication. Please use the additional pain medications as prescribed in addition to the Tylenol. Use cold therapy/ ice units regularly to help reduce discomfort. Avoid alcoholic beverages and notify our office if pain is not well-controlled.

What should I do to avoid constipation?

Following surgery, you will be prescribed a stool softener. It is important to take this medication and modify your diet. Drink plenty of fluids, eat fruits, and incorporate increased fiber into your diet.

If you continue to have symptoms of constipation you will need to discontinue the narcotic medication. You can also take Milk of Magnesia (an oral laxative), or use Magnesium Citrate, a stronger option.

How long do I have to wear the brace, or sling?

This depends on the type of surgery that was performed on your knee, shoulder, elbow, or ankle. The amount of time you are to remain in your medical device will be discussed with your family while you are in your recovery. It will also be included in your discharge instructions. Your physical therapist will also serve as a guide for discontinuing or weaning the use of the brace/sling. Our goal is to only require the supportive device for the minimum duration necessary.

For ***hinged knee braces***, after the first 6 days you may begin to sleep without the brace at night and remove during the day when seated.

For ***shoulder sling / immobilizer***, after the first 6 days you may begin removing the sling at home and resting the elbow on a pillow for support. If the pillow component is uncomfortable, this may be removed to simplify the sling apparatus.

Frequently Asked Questions

Once your surgery is complete, you will receive discharge instructions. These will be reviewed with you and anyone present with you for support on the day of your surgery.

What if my surgical site swells after surgery?

It is common to experience swelling after surgery. Swelling can also be delayed—occurring several days after surgery. Remember that your body is healing from surgery, and as a result swelling is normal. It is also very common to have increased swelling with increased activity, such as physical therapy. With that said, we do want you to remain active and participate in therapy as directed by your physical therapist.

If your swelling persists past several days and is accompanied by redness, heat, or coolness at your surgical site—please discuss with your physical therapist and if further concern, please contact our office.

Why do you need to drink Gatorade or Powerade before surgery?

Gatorade/Powerade have many benefits studied in the Anesthesiology literature. When consumed 12 hours & 4 hours prior to surgery, the electrolytes increase your comfort before surgery, reduce your nausea after surgery and the carbohydrates help reduce the body's response to surgery.

**Patients with Diabetes, please use low-sugar Gatorade or Powerade.*

Surgical Team

Zahab S. Ahsan, MD

Zahab Ahsan, MD is board-certified Orthopaedic Surgeon who is fellowship trained in Sports Medicine & Shoulder Surgery.

Dr. Ahsan received his Bachelors in Biomedical Engineering at Purdue University and proceeded to Indiana University where he earned his Doctorate in Medicine. He then completed Orthopaedic surgery residency training at the prestigious University of Washington and Harborview Medical Centers in Seattle, Washington.

Dr. Ahsan was then selected to undergo additional subspecialty training in Sports Medicine and minimally invasive arthroscopic surgery at the world-renowned Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS) in New York City, annually recognized by U.S. News and World Report as the #1 Hospital for Orthopaedic Surgery.

Dr. Ahsan's surgical philosophy is unparalleled and based on the most state-of-the-art, evidence-based techniques. Dr. Ahsan's high level of patient care is guided by his experience providing sports medicine care to professional athletes of the NBA, NFL, MLB, NHL, MLS, and U.S. Olympic team.

Dr. Ahsan has devoted his career to mastering the treatment of musculoskeletal injuries. He is committed to guiding his patients to a complete recovery and a life without pain or restrictions through innovative treatment and minimally invasive arthroscopic surgery.

Dr. Ahsan has been recognized as a Top Doctor on the national level by Castle Connolly and locally by Chicago Magazine.

Beginning with the 2024 season, Dr. Ahsan was honored to join the medical staff a Team Physician for the Chicago Fire FC Soccer team.



Sincer K. Jacob, MMS, PA-C

Sincer Jacob is a board-certified Advanced Practice Clinician, who specializes in Orthopaedic Surgery & Sports Medicine. He also operates and supports Dr. Ahsan with surgical cases.

He began his medical career in critical respiratory medicine, where he managed life support at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center. He completed training at Harvard-Affiliated Massachusetts General Hospital and then obtained an advanced graduate medical education degree from the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University.

Sincer graduated as President of his class in 2013 and initially worked in Lung Transplantation/Cardiothoracic Surgery at the University of Chicago. He then transitioned into Orthopaedic Surgery and received advanced specialized training in Sports Medicine at Midwest Orthopaedics at Rush, working with the Chicago Bulls, Chicago White Sox, and Chicago Fire Soccer Club.

Sincer has devoted his career to serving patients in and beyond Chicago. He has received national recognition for his work locally and abroad. In addition, he continues to serve as a lecturer for Northwestern and Yale Universities. He has a detail-oriented approach to his work that has proven effective, efficient, and successful.

A personalized and patient-centered approach.

Zahab Ahsan, MD and Sincer Jacob, PA-C are partners and colleagues with a commitment to exceptional, evidence-based, patient-centered medicine.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Important Notes (cont.):

Diet Instructions Before Surgery:

- Drink 12oz of Gatorade or Powerade (any flavor **except red**) and **complete** 12 hours prior AND 4 hours prior to your scheduled surgery.

**Patients with Diabetes, please use low-sugar Gatorade or Powerade.*

- Take 1000mg of Tylenol (Acetaminophen) with your Gatorade 4 hours prior to your scheduled surgery time.
- No foods after 11pm prior to the day of surgery.
- No other fluids 12 hours prior to the day of surgery (except Gatorade/Powerade).

Preoperative Skin Preparation:

- Buy a special cleansing solution called Hibiclens® (4% chlorhexidine gluconate) 8oz bottle & shower daily with this soap five consecutive days prior to surgery.
 - Do not use this soap on your head or face, or if you are allergic to Chlorhexidine Gluconate.
 - Avoid the genital area.
- Do not shave near the area of surgery for at least 48 hours before surgery.
- Please avoid applying deodorant to the underarms on the day of shoulder surgery.



Team Concept

We strive for excellence and perfection 24/7.



Important Notes

Blood Clot Prevention

After surgery, blood clots called deep venous thromboses (DVT) may form in the leg veins. In rare occasions, these blood clots can travel into the lungs and become fatal. To prevent and reduce the incidence of clot formation, mechanical devices (foot or calf pumps) are used while you are in the hospital to maintain blood flow in the veins.

Depending on your surgery, you may also be prescribed Aspirin. If this prescribed, please take this as directed to help prevent blood clot development.

Leg/Arm Swelling

Following surgery, most patients develop swelling in the operative leg or arm. Although the amount of swelling can vary from patient to patient, the swelling itself is normal and may be accompanied by “black and blue” bruising. This typically resolves gradually over several weeks.

If you had lower extremity surgery, prolonged sitting with your foot in a downward position will worsen your swelling. You should avoid sitting for more than 30-45 minutes at a time, and periods of movement/walking should be alternated with periods of elevating your leg in bed. When elevating the leg, the ankle should be near the level of the heart.

Tips to reduce swelling:

- ☐ Elevate the operated leg or arm in bed on one or two pillows while lying flat.
- ☐ Avoid sitting longer than 30-45 minutes at a time.
- ☐ Perform ankle exercises/pumps.
- ☐ Apply ice to the surgical site a minimum of three times per day for 20 minutes.

Anesthesia

General

During general anesthesia the entire body, including the brain is anesthetized. The patient has no awareness, feeling or memory of the surgical experience afterward. General anesthesia is administered by injecting a liquid anesthetic into a vein, or by breathing gas anesthetic flowing from an anesthesia. With the tube in place, it is normal to have a slight sore throat after your surgery and nausea.

Regional (Nerve Block)

A nerve block is an injection of anesthetic into the neck region for shoulder/elbow surgery, or into the thigh for knee surgery that blocks pain impulses before they reach the brain. With this anesthetic, mental alertness is unaffected. This anesthetic may result in numbness of the hand or foot and last for 12-24 hours or longer. Regional anesthesia is typically used for shoulder surgery and knee procedures such as ACL reconstruction.

It is important to start your postoperative pain medication as soon as you begin to feel the onset of discomfort, or when the numbness begins to wear off.

Your Anesthesiologist will meet you prior to surgery and discuss the best personalized option.

Registered Surgical Assistant

Dr. Ahsan works closely with a skilled Surgical Assistant who has greater than 20 years of experience in various surgical disciplines including Vascular Trauma, Obstetrics / Gynecology, Thoracic and General Surgery. He has since transitioned to primarily working in Orthopaedic and Plastic Surgery.

This collaboration between Dr. Ahsan with his Surgical Assistant facilitates reproducible and high-quality care in the Operating Room for our patients.

*"The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team."
-Phil Jackson, Hall of Fame NBA Coach*

Medical Assistants

Our group of talented medical assistants are the backbone of our team. They each have extensive background in patient care and prioritize strong interpersonal connections. They play a vital role in all daily operations to allow for a personalized and tailored patient experience.

Surgery Schedulers

The surgery scheduling team is composed of thoughtful, highly organized, and efficient individuals who are committed to the care of our patients. A surgery scheduler will communicate with you directly after the pre-surgical clinical appointment to review and outline the details of surgery to help guide you through each step of the process. They will be readily available to answer further questions that may arise leading up to the day of surgery.

Surgical Details

Locations

Elmhurst Outpatient Surgery Center (EOSC)

America's Best Surgery Centers

Address:
[1200 S. York, Road Suite 1400](#)
[Elmhurst, IL 60126](#)



Please complete your online health history questionnaire once your procedure is scheduled. The pre-admission staff will contact you 1-5 days before surgery to review your medical history and provide instructions.

If you have not received a call by 4pm the day before surgery, or have additional questions please call: **630-758-8800**.

Edward Hospital

Fortune/PINC AI Top Hospital

Address:
[801 S. Washington Street](#)
[Naperville, IL 60540](#)



Please park in the South Parking Lot at Edward Hospital. You may proceed into the hospital, take D elevators to the second floor for check in with Surgery.

If you have not received a call by 4pm the day before surgery, or have additional questions please call: **630-646-7000**.

13 MOST ANTI-INFLAMMATORY FOODS



INFLAMMATORY FOODS



Your diet following surgery promotes healing.



BEFORE SURGERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ Call your assigned physical therapist / PT group and schedule your first appointment which must begin the **first day** after surgery (unless otherwise directed/after splint removal for elbow & ankle surgery).
- ☐ Obtain preoperative clearance from your primary care provider (PCP) two to three weeks prior to surgery (not required unless directly stated).
 - This should be faxed by your PCP to **(630) 548-1563**.
 - Stop taking the following medications at the recommended timelines (and confirm with your primary physician)
 - Stop herbal supplements, multivitamins, Vitamin E, appetite suppressants, fish oil, and narcotics **two (2) weeks prior to surgery**.
 - Stop blood thinners and NSAIDs **seven (7) days prior to surgery** unless otherwise instructed by the prescribing provider.
 - Stop alcohol use **24 hours prior to surgery**.
- ☐ Verify your first postoperative appointment with our office has been scheduled via Epic MyChart. This will be on Sincer Jacob's schedule.
- ☐ Pick up your Durable Medical Equipment (DME). Our team can also answer questions related to your equipment (braces, splints/slides, crutches, and cold therapy units).
- ☐ No food or drink (except Gatorade / Powerade) after midnight the night before surgery.
- ☐ Use Hibiclens® (4% Chlorhexidine Gluconate) to clean the surgical site for 5 days prior to surgery.
- ☐ **Complete all requirements listed by the Elmhurst Outpatient Surgery Center (EOSC) or Edward Hospital as notified.**
- ☐ If you are traveling from out of town, please inform the hospital and let them know of your housing accommodations.

DAY OF SURGERY CHECKLIST

Please bring:

- ☐ Your surgical folder & this handbook!
- ☐ Photo ID.
- ☐ Insurance card.
- ☐ Family member/Friend for support and assistance.
- ☐ Brace/Sling or Assistive Devices (durable medical equipment).
- ☐ Medication list.
- ☐ If you use an inhaler on a regular basis, please bring it with you.
- ☐ Non-slip closed toe shoes.
- ☐ Credit card.
- ☐ Case for glasses/contacts (will need to remove before surgery).
- ☐ Book, magazine, or hobby item.
- ☐ Transportation arrangements (Rideshare/Taxi not permitted).

Important Note:

Take only prescribed medications instructed to be continued by your primary care team. This includes medications for conditions such as hypertension (high blood pressure), or cardiac arrhythmias (ex: irregular heartbeat). Please inform your anesthesia team of these conditions on the day of surgery and your medication list.

Please do not bring:

- ☐ Jewelry/piercings.
- ☐ Valuables.
- ☐ Remove acrylic nails.

Home Exercises (lower body):

In the rare circumstance that you were not able to have physical therapy set up the day following surgery, please begin a home exercise program.

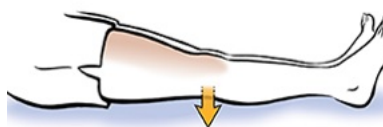
Ankle Pumps:

Begin by laying on your back with both legs straight. Bring your feet upwards, “toes to your nose.” Then point both feet downwards, “press on gas pedal.” Make sure to move the feet and ankles up and down through full range of motion. This will help promote blood circulation in the lower legs. Perform 30 times, 12 times daily.



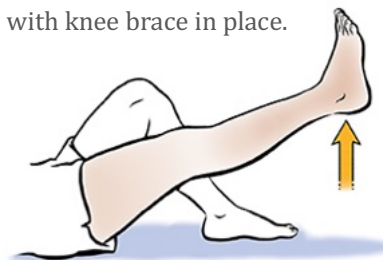
Quad Contractions:

Sit on the floor with your injured leg extended and your other leg bent. Slowly contract the quadriceps (thigh) of the injured knee without moving the leg. Hold for 15 seconds, and repeat 10 times per day.



Straight Leg Raises:

Lie on your back, with your uninvolved knee bent. Straighten your other knee with a quadriceps muscle contraction. Slowly raise your leg until your foot is about 12 inches from the floor. Slowly lower it to the floor and relax. Perform 15 reps, eight times daily. This can be performed with knee brace in place.



Home Exercises (cont.)

Grip Strengthening:

Begin this exercise by making a tight fist or by gripping a rubber ball. Hold this position for 10 seconds then release. Repeat 30 times, three times per day. This exercise works your hands to help prevent blood clots, and strengthen your muscles after surgery.

Supported Arm Pendulum:

Start this exercise by bending over at your waist. Using your other arm for stability, make small clockwise and counterclockwise circles with your affected shoulder. Repeat 30 times, three times per day.



AFTER SURGERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ Please begin the home-based exercises as soon as possible (same day of surgery).
- ☐ Resume normal diet following surgery.
- ☐ Please take the prescribed medication as directed. May begin Tylenol on evening of surgery even if nerve block is still working.
- ☐ Meet with your assigned physical therapist (day after surgery unless otherwise directed).
 - This visit is important to establish guidelines for safe activity after surgery and to begin the rehab process.
- ☐ Your surgical incisions will be covered with a clear/white dressing. **Please keep this on until your first postoperative appointment.** Removing this early may increase your chance of a wound complication.

Let yourself rest.



Physical Therapy & Post-Operative Rehabilitation

Our surgical results and patient reported outcomes are exceptional—largely in part to the rehabilitation team chosen for your care.

Your therapy team is a top priority in order to achieve the results needed to reach your functional goals. We have hand selected and partnered with many therapists that specialize in the surgeries that we perform. They are additionally in direct contact with us at all times regarding your recovery.

These physical therapists have outstanding education, are personal and relatable, and very well-experienced to tailor your treatment plan to make sure you are progressing as expected.

You will receive an assigned physical therapist to work with. It is **your responsibility** to set up and schedule your first physical therapy appointment **the day after surgery**. This initial visit is important for establishing guidelines and a customized plan for your recovery.

The most important part of your recovery is not the surgery, but rather the rehabilitation after.



Home Exercises

Home Exercises (upper body):

Hand and Wrist Range of Motion:

Intermittently throughout the day, please move your hand and wrist to avoid stiffness and encourage blood flow/reduction of swelling.



Elbow Range of Motion:

Before starting this exercise, remove your sling. With your arm bent at a 90-degree angle, straighten and bend your arm as though brushing something off the front of you. Repeat 30 times, three times per day. This exercise will help avoid stiffness in your elbow after being in a sling for long periods of time.