

Pectoralis Minor Release — Pre-Operative Patient Guide

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Pectoralis Minor Tightness with Shoulder Blade Dysfunction

Your Condition & Procedure

The condition

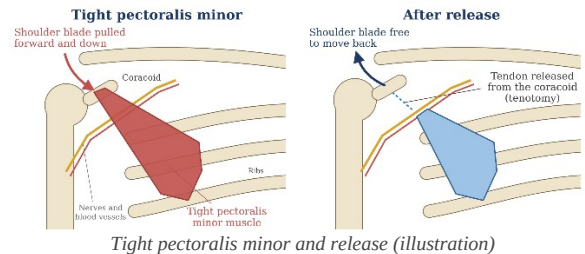
The **pectoralis minor** is a small muscle that runs from the upper ribs to the front of the shoulder blade (the coracoid). When it is tight or scarred, it tips the shoulder blade, causing pain at the front of the shoulder, poor shoulder-blade motion, and occasionally pinching of the nerves/blood vessels which can cause numbness, tingling, or fatigue.

The surgery

Pectoralis minor release is a typically outpatient surgery done through a small small open incision. The tight tendon is released from the coracoid so the shoulder blade can settle into a better position. Nothing is repaired, so motion begins right away. Immediate quality rehab is critical to success of the surgery.

Risks & benefits

Benefits: Most patients have less pain and better shoulder-blade position and motion. **Risks** are uncommon and include infection, blood clots, incomplete relief or return of symptoms, scar tissue re-forming if stretching is not kept up, temporary nerve irritation (numbness, tingling, or weakness in the arm), injury to nearby structures (such as nerves, blood vessels, or cartilage), stiffness, persistent pain, and the need for further surgery. These will be reviewed with you in detail before surgery.



Before Surgery

- **Medications:** We will tell you what to stop and when (e.g., blood thinners, anti-inflammatories, some supplements, weight-loss injections).
- **Fasting:** Follow the instructions from your surgery coordinator/facility. In general, you should have nothing to eat or drink starting at midnight the night before surgery.
- **Nicotine:** Stop all nicotine products—they slow healing.
- **Equipment:** A sling is provided for comfort only.
- **Physical therapy:** Schedule your first visit for 2–3 days after surgery.
- **Home:** Plan for a helper at first; a recliner can make sleep easier.
- **Medical history:** Let us know if you or anyone in your family has a history of blood clot disorders or a malignant hyperthermia reaction to anesthesia.
- **Health:** Call us if you develop a fever, illness, or skin problem near the shoulder.

Day of Surgery

- If instructed, take blood pressure/heart medications with a small sip of water.
- Arrive at the time given by your surgery coordinator.
- Bring your medication list, insurance card, photo ID, and sling if you have them.
- Wear a loose, button-front shirt; leave jewelry and valuables at home.
- A responsible adult must drive you home. You may **not** drive yourself.

Immediately After Surgery

- You will recover in the recovery area; most patients go home the same day.
- Your surgeon will discuss the procedure with you and your support person.
- Your care team will review wound care, restrictions, medications, follow-up, and warning signs before discharge.

Milestone	What to Expect After Surgery (General Timeline)
Sling	For comfort only, 1–2 weeks. There are no motion restrictions.
Daily life	Motion and stretching exercises start 2 days after surgery, with full motion by 2–3 weeks. Desk work often within the first week. No driving while taking narcotic pain medication.
Lifting & overhead	Full strengthening begins at 2 weeks. Heavy and overhead lifting wait until the shoulder blade is stable, typically ~3 months.
Sports	Full activity and sports at 2–3 months. Daily stretching is what protects your result—stiffness is the main risk.
► Please note: This is a general guide only. Detailed post-operative instructions will be provided on the day of surgery, and your restrictions and timeline may change based on the findings and procedures performed.	

Learn More

We **strongly recommend** reading these pages from the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (OrthoInfo) before your surgery:

- **Related reading:** Scapular (Shoulder Blade) Disorders — <https://orthoinfo.org/en/diseases--conditions/scapular-shoulder-blade-disorders/>

Questions before surgery? Call our office at (972) 378-1438. For a medical emergency, call 911.