

REHABILITATION FOLLOWING
OPEN AND MINI-OPEN ROTATOR CUFF REPAIR

Post-Operative Physical Therapy Protocol

Phase I – Immediate Post-Surgical Phase (Week 1 -2)

Goals:

- Maintain integrity of the repair
- Gradually increase PROM
- Diminish pain and inflammation
- No unrestricted AROM first 6 weeks
- From outset- can use hand and wrist when elbow at side, i.e. using phone, buttoning clothes, cutting food are all OK

Week 1:

- Sling/Cradle - to be worn whenever on feet for first 6 weeks, may remove whenever off feet, ie- sit, rest, sleep
- Pendulum exercises
- PROM
Flexion at least 105 degrees
IR/ER scapular plane to 35 degrees
- Elbow/hand AROM and gripping exercises
- Ice for pain/inflammation (10-15 minutes every hour)
 - Use GameReady for comfort when available

Week 2:

- Continue sling
- Pendulums (flexion, circles, etc.)
- PROM to tolerance
Flexion 145 degrees
IR/ER scapular plane to 45 degrees

- Continue elbow/hand work
- Continue ice for pain control (several times daily)
- Sleep in brace is optional

Precautions:

1. No lifting
2. No excessive shoulder extension
3. No aggressive stretching or sudden unprotected movements
4. No supporting body weight by hands
5. Keep incision clean and dry

Phase II – Protection Phase (weeks 3 – 8)

Goals:

- Allow healing of soft tissue
- Do not overstress healing tissue
- Gradually restore full PROM (week 4 – 5)
- Re-establish dynamic shoulder stability
- Decrease pain and inflammation

Week 3:

Continue sling

- PROM to tolerance
Flexion to 145 – 160 degrees
IR/ER at 90 degrees abduction to 45 degrees

Week 4 – 5:

- Progress PROM
- Begin AAROM
Flexion to tolerance
IR/ER at 90 degrees abduction to tolerance
- Begin submaximal isometrics
Flexion/bent elbow
Extension/bent elbow
Abduction/bent elbow
IR/ER scapular plane
Elbow flexion

- Dynamic stabilization drills
IR/ER scapular plane
Flexion/extension RS – at 100 degrees flexion, 10 degrees horizontal abd
- Continue ice as needed
- Heat prior to ROM
- Pool for light AROM (as available)
- Discontinue brace end of week 4-5 based on size of tear/MD discretion

Week 6 – 8

- Heat prior to exercise
- D/C sling
- Continue AAROM and stretching
- Begin AROM as tolerated
- Continue isometrics
- Progress rhythmic stabilization
IR/ER scapular plane
Flexion/extension
- Initiate IR/ER theraband at 0 degrees abduction

Precautions:

1. No lifting
2. No excessive behind the back motions
3. No supporting body weight with hands
4. No sudden unprotected movements

Phase III – Intermediate Phase (weeks 8- 15)

Goals:

- Full AROM (weeks 14 – 16)
- Maintain full PROM
- Dynamic shoulder stabilization
- Restore shoulder strength and power
- Return to functional activity

Weeks 8 – 12:

- Continue stretching and PROM (as needed)
- Continue IR/ER theraband at 0 degrees abduction

- Continue dynamic stabilization drills
- Initiate AROM
Standing scaption with ER to 90 degrees
Standing abduction to 90 degrees
Sidelying ER
Prone rowing
Elbow flexion/extension
Wall stabilization drills

Note: Patient must be able to elevate arm without scapular substitution prior to Beginning AROM, if unable, continue dynamic stabilization exercises.

Week 12:

- Progress strengthening program
IR/ER theraband
ER sidelying
Lateral raises
Full can in scapular plane
Prone rowing
Prone horizontal abduction
Elbow flexion
Elbow extension
- Increase weight one pound every 10 – 14 days

Week 14:

- Continue all prior exercises
- Progress to functional shoulder exercises

Phase IV: - Advanced Strengthening Phase (weeks 16 – 22)

Goals:

- Maintain Full non-painful ROM
- Improve functional use of UE
- Improve muscular strength and power

Week 16:

- Continue ROM and stretching to maintain full ROM
- Self capsular stretches

- Progress shoulder strengthening exercises

Week 20:

- Continue all prior exercises
- Continue to perform ROM stretching if unable to maintain full ROM

Phase V: - Return to Activity Phase (weeks 23 – 26)

Goals:

- Gradual return to strenuous work activity
- Gradual return to recreational sport activity

Week 23:

- Continue functional exercises (HEP at least 4 x per week)
- Continue stretching, if shoulder is tight

Week 26:

- Initiate interval sport program