

Arthroscopic Rotator Cuff Repair - Large Tear

PHYSICAL THERAPY PROTOCOL

PHASE I: Protective Phase

Goals:

Minimize pain and swelling
Immobilization to allow for healing

POST-OP WEEKS 0-5

- Elbow, wrist and hand AROM (EWH) as long as elbow at side
- Minimal Codman's pendulum exercises to allow for personal hygiene in shower only
- No formal physical therapy until week 6, we will instruct in scapular isometrics in office

PHASE II: Activation & Range of Motion Phase

Goals:

Begin ROM exercises
Achieve ROM goals

POST-OP WEEKS 5-12

- Elbow, wrist and hand AROM (EWH)
- Codman's pendulum exercises as tolerated
- Passive forward elevation (PFE) to tolerance
- Passive external rotation (PER) to tolerance with T-stick in
 - 0-20 degrees flexion and 20 degrees abduction
- C-spine AROM
- Ice
- Positioning full time in sling with abduction pillow
- Shoulder shrugs and retractions (no weight)
- Pain control modalities PRN
- Aquatics PROM
- **Slowly progress PROM in forward elevation and external rotation, no internal rotation**
 - **No behind the back motion**
- Complications/Cautions: If pain level is not dissipating, decrease intensity and volume of exercises.
 - **No AAROM or AROM until 6 weeks**
 - **No Pulley until 6 weeks**
- **NO THERABANDS, NO THERABANDS, NO THERABANDS**
- Heat/ice PRN to help obtain motion
- D/C sling as comfortable at 6 weeks
- Achieve PROM goals in FE (full)
- Achieve PROM goals in ER at 20 deg and 90 deg abduction (full)
 - No internal rotation until week 12
- Initiate posterior capsule stretching
- Scapula retractions
- Aquatics
- Mobilizations PRN

- Trunk stabilization/strengthening
- Start AAFE and progress to AFE
- Start periscapular strengthening
 - Very low weight and high repetitions
- Cautions:
 - Do not initiate rotator cuff strengthening until 12 weeks
 - NO THERABANDS, NO THERABANDS, NO THERABANDS

PHASE III: Progressive Strengthening

Goals:

Achieve staged ROM goals

Eliminate shoulder pain

Improve strength, endurance and power

Increase functional activities

POST-OP MONTHS 4-6

- Stretching PRN
- Continue deltoid/cuff/and scapula strengthening as above
 - 5lbs max (after month 4) for isotonic strengthening
 - Follow the below progression:
 1. Prone isotonic strengthening PRN
 2. Decreasing amounts of external stabilization provided to shoulder girdle
 3. Integrate functional patterns
 4. Increase speed of movements
 5. Integrate kinesthetic awareness drills into strengthening activities
 6. Decrease in rest time to improve endurance
- Progressive CKC dynamic stability activities
- Impulse
- Initiate isokinetic strengthening
- Mobilizations PRN
- Trunk stabilization/strengthening

POST-OP MONTHS 6+

- Discharged to full activity, return to normal work activity
- Continue stretching prn for stiffness
- Continue with home strengthening program for improvement, strength, and healing