

Arthroscopic Rotator Cuff Repair - Small Tear

PHYSICAL THERAPY PROTOCOL

PHASE I: Protective Phase

Goals:

Tendon healing while restoring some motion
Minimize pain and swelling
Achieve ROM goals

Restrictions:

No active elevation
No IR behind back
NO THERABANDS

POST-OP WEEKS 0-2

- Ice
- Positioning full time in sling
- Elbow, wrist and hand AROM (EWH) but elbow remains by side
- No shoulder motion
- Minimal Codman dangles for personal hygiene only while in shower
- C-spine AROM
- Shoulder shrugs and retractions (no weight)
- Pain control modalities PRN

POST-OP WEEKS 2-5

- Codman's pendulum exercises as tolerated
- Supine/Sitting/Standing passive forward elevation (PFE) to tolerance
- Passive external rotation (PER) to tolerance with T-stick in
 - 0-20 degrees flexion and 20 degrees abduction
- Aquatics PROM after 3 weeks
- **Slowly progress PROM in forward elevation and external rotation, no internal rotation**
 - **No behind the back motion**
- Complications/Cautions:
 - **No AAROM or AROM until 6 weeks post op**
 - **No Pulley until 6 weeks post op**
 - **NO THERABANDS, NO THERABANDS, NO THERABANDS**

PHASE II: Activation & Range of Motion Phase

Goals:

Begin protected activation
Achieve ROM goals, full elevation and ER

Restrictions:

No IR behind back
No lifting

POST-OP WEEKS 5-12

- 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**

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
- 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