

Postoperative Rehabilitation Protocol for Reverse Total Shoulder Arthroplasty



Dr. MacLean

Patient will wear an abduction pillow sling for 6 weeks postoperatively.

Unless otherwise specified, do not begin physical therapy until patient has been seen for 2-week postoperative visit.

Postoperative weeks 0-2

PRECAUTIONS

- Sling must be worn at all times.

RANGE OF MOTION

- Pendulum exercises (3x/day)
- Hand, wrist and elbow ROM as tolerated

Postoperative weeks 2-6

PRECAUTIONS

- Sling must continue to be worn at all times except during physical therapy or home exercises.

RANGE OF MOTION

- Passive ROM
 - Forward elevation to 140 degrees, advance as tolerated
 - ER limited to 45 degrees (protect the subscapularis repair)
 - Abduction to 120 degrees, advance as tolerated
 - **No cross-body adduction or IR motion at this phase**
- Active-assisted forward elevation using pulleys to 90 degrees
 - Elbow extension and flexion

STRENGTHENING

- Periscapular strengthening exercises
- Shoulder sub-maximal (pain free) isometrics
- Hand and wrist exercises with light resistance if appropriate

Postoperative weeks 6-12

RANGE OF MOTION

- Progress PROM as tolerated from supine to vertical position
- Begin IR and cross-body motion
- Begin AAROM to AROM exercises in all directions, progress as tolerated but limiting excessive

STRENGTHENING

- Begin light resisted ER/FF/ABD: isometrics and bands, concentric motions only
- No resisted IR / shoulder extension until 12 weeks post-op
- No scapular retractions with bands yet

Postoperative weeks 12+

RANGE OF MOTION

- Progress to full PROM and AROM as tolerated
- Teach patient flexibility exercises to continue at home to encourage full ROM

STRENGTHENING

- Begin resisted IR and extension: isometrics → light bands → weights
- Increase other resistive exercises
- Include weights and resistance bands. Begin eccentric motions, plyometrics, and closed chain exercises.

If you have any problems or questions, please call your doctor's office (8am-5pm).

Answering service for after hours.

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- Restore normal scapulothoracic rhythm/motion
- Progress as tolerated
- Transition to home exercise program