

## REHABILITATION GUIDELINES

### **REHABILITATION GUIDELINES AFTER ARTHROSCOPIC ROTATOR CUFF REPAIR**

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*The intent of this protocol is to provide the therapist with guidelines of the post-operative rehabilitation course after rotator cuff repair. It should not be a substitute for one's clinical decision making regarding the progression of a patient's post-operative course based on their physical exam findings, individual progress, and/or the presence of post-operative complications. The physical therapist should consult the referring physician with any questions or concerns.*

#### **INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

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#### **PHASE I (0-4 weeks)**

##### ***Goals***

- Control inflammation and pain
- Use cryocuff 3-4 times per day

##### ***Sling***

- Wear continuously for 4 weeks (may remove for dressing and showering)

##### ***Therapeutic Exercises***

- Pendulum exercises
- Painless PROM in all planes
- No active ROM

## **PHASE II (4- 6 weeks)**

### ***Criteria***

- Pain-free passive forward flexion to 120 degrees, passive external rotation to 45 degrees at the side and in 90 degrees of abduction, passive internal rotation to buttock

### ***Goals***

- Full, painless PROM

### ***Sling***

- Wear continuously for 4 weeks
- Use for comfort only from 4-6 weeks

### ***Therapeutic Exercises***

- Continue to progress with PROM in all planes
- Elbow and wrist ROM exercises
- Gentle scapular/glenohumeral joint mobilization to regain full PROM

## **PHASE III (6 -8 weeks)**

### ***Criteria***

- Full passive ROM

### ***Goals***

- Progress with AAROM

### ***Therapeutic Exercise***

- Active assisted ROM flexion in the supine position
- Aqua therapy to progress with AAROM
- May use heat prior to exercises
- Always ice after therapy session

## **PHASE IV (8-12 weeks)**

### ***Criteria***

- Full, painless PROM

- Full AAROM in forward flexion in the supine position

### ***Goals***

- Full AROM in all planes
- Maintain full PROM
- Optimize neuromuscular control

### ***Therapeutic Exercises***

- Initiate AROM in all planes
- Light strengthening with <5 pounds of weight in all planes

## **PHASE V (3 months+)**

### ***Criteria***

- Full, painless PROM and AROM in all planes
- Able to tolerate progression to low-level functional activities

### ***Goals***

- Maintain full PROM and AROM
- Progress with strengthening
- Return to sports at 5-6 months

### ***Therapeutic Exercises***

- Continue gentle stretching and PROM as needed
- Initiate strengthening program only after patient can elevate arm in the scapular plane without shoulder or scapular hiking
  - External /Internal rotation with sport tubing (Theraband)
  - Full can in scapular plane (\*\*avoid empty can at all times)
- Advance proprioceptive and neuromuscular activities

### ***Return to Sports***

- May return to sports that require overhead activity at 5-6 months when ROM is symmetric and painless and strength is 90% of contralateral side.