



Rotator Cuff Shoulder Protocol Medium to large rotator cuff tears

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PHASE I (WEEK 0 – 4) IMMEDIATE POST SURGICAL PHASE

Goals

- Maintain integrity of repair
- Gradually increase PROM
- Decrease pain and inflammation
- Prevent muscular inhibition

Precautions

- No lifting
- No excessive behind-the-back movements
- No supporting body weight with hands/arms
- No sudden jerking movements

Sleeping

- Sleep in sling/brace

PHASE II (WEEK 4 – 8) PROTECTION PHASE

Goals

- Allow healing of soft tissue
- Do not overstress healing tissue
- Gradually restore full PROM (Goal by week 5-6)
- Re-establish dynamic shoulder stability
- Decrease pain and inflammation

Week 4-6

- Continue use of ice as needed
- Gradually progress to full PROM
- May use heat prior to ROM
- Continue use of sling until end of week 6 (Dr. Arthur discretion)
- Initiate AAROM and stretching exercises (supine with therapist supporting arm)

Week 6-7

- May use heat prior to exercises
- Continue AAROM and stretching exercises
- Initiate AROM exercises

PHASE III (WEEK 8 – 12) INTERMEDIATE PHASE**Goals**

- Full AROM (week 8-10)
- Maintain full PROM
- Dynamic shoulder stability
- Gradual restoration of shoulder strength and power
- Gradual return to functional activities

Therapeutic Exercises

- Continue stretching and PROM as needed to maintain ROM
- Continue dynamic stabilization
- Continue above exercises
- May progress to light functional activities

PHASE IV (WEEK 12 – 16) ADVANCE STRENGTHENING PHASE**Goals**

- Maintain full ROM
- Enhance functional use of limb
- Improve shoulder strength and power
- Gradual return to functional activities

PHASE V (WEEK 16 – 24) RETURN TO ACTIVITY PHASE**Goals**

- Gradual return to strenuous work activities
- Gradual return to recreational sports activities