

Rotator Cuff Protocol

Pre-op Instruction

- Sling and cryotherapy instruction. Must sleep with sling on, but may be out of sling while sitting at home and other non “at risk” activities.
- May begin gentle passive range of motion (PROM) activities excluding external rotation.
- Incision- Keep dry for first 48 hrs. Remove dressing after two days.
- Keep dry until the staples are removed 7-10 days post-op. Watch for excessive redness or discharge.

Phase I- Maximum Protection (Weeks 0 to 4)

Weeks 0 to 2 (only):

- Discuss wound care along with use and duration of immobilizer.
- Review pre-op protocol emphasizing passive ROM and Codmann exercises
- Make necessary adjustments to program based on physician’s post-op orders.
- Begin formal PT treatment program 7-10 days post-op.
- Grade 1 and 2 mobilization with passive ROM – all ranges excluding internal rotation.
- Ice and other appropriate modalities for pain and inflammation management.
- Passive ROM Goals at end of 2nd week:
 - Flexion – 90 degrees
 - Abduction – 90 degrees
 - External Rotation – 30 degrees
 - Internal Rotation – 0 degrees
- Can begin active wrist and elbow motion (unless biceps tenodesis is performed).



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Weeks 2 to 4:

- Continue with Grade 1 and 2 mobilization and passive ROM.
- Add passive external rotation using a wand to the home program at week 3.
- Add scapular stabilization exercises (shrugs and scapular retraction).
- Progress home program to include active assistive ROM, including pulley exercises.

Phase II - Progressive ROM and Active motion (Weeks 4 to 6)

Weeks 4 to 6:

- Add grade II and III mobilization along with more aggressive Glenohumeral ROM.
- Continue with home program emphasizing active assistive ROM.
- Add internal rotation at week 5.
- Begin active motion program at week 6 – all planes.
- ROM Goals at week 6.
 - Flexion 150 degrees
 - Abduction 150 degrees
 - External Rotation 60 degrees
 - Internal Rotation 20 degrees

Phase III- Strengthening Phase (Weeks 7 to 10)

Weeks 7 to 10

- Continue with Grade III mobilization and may progress to Grade IV if experiencing capsular restriction.
- Continue with passive motion as needed to achieve full ROM.
- At week 8 add theraband strengthening for rotator cuff all muscle groups. Begin 1 set 12-15 reps. And progress to 3 sets 12- 15 repetitions. In 1-2 weeks.
- ROM Goals at week 10 – full.
- Passive ROM with internal rotation at 45 degrees.

Phase IV – Advanced Strengthening and Sport Specific Training

- Continue with theraband exercises.
- Add dumbbell rotator cuff strengthening at week 10
- Begin plyometric/ plyoball exercises at week 12 if rotator cuff strength is adequate.
- General weight lifting exercises at week 12-14- ie. Bench press, military press, seated rows, Lat. Pulls, etc. (begin high reps. 12-15, low weight)

Phase V –

- Follow up examination with Physician for clearance to return to athletic participation.
- If throwing athlete, Initiate throwing program as directed by Physician and team ATC/PT.