



**OPERATIVE ROTATOR CUFF REPAIR POST-OP PROTOCOL
(ROUTINE, NOT MASSIVE REPAIRS)**

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PHASE I (0 to 4 weeks)

- A. Patient to wear sling or abduction pillow continuously for 4 weeks. May remove for dressing and hygiene. May remove sling for tabletop activities within pain tolerance such as eating, brushing teeth and occasional keyboard use. May remove sling for exercises, showering and dressing.

If in an abductor brace or pillow, on PROM and AAROM above the level of brace or pillow. The abductor brace is used only for patients with a problem with the deltoid; therefore, protect anterior deltoid.

GOAL: Full PROM to pre-set limits or if no limits, to symmetric ROM

PRECAUTIONS: Protect anterior deltoid

- B. PROM/AAROM only to limits determined in operating room. If no limits on prescription, assume patient able to do full ROM.
- Pendulum (Codman) exercises
 - See wand exercise sheet for PROM/AAROM exercises - supine only
 - Strongly suggest home pulley use
 - Ice following treatment and home exercises
 - Scapular stabilization exercise #1 (scapular retraction)
 - Internal rotation to back pocket only

PHASE II (4-6weeks)

A. AAROM advance from supine to standing

B. AROM, no weight, pain-free arc only, per rotator cuff exercise sheet #1-8 as tolerated

PRECAUTIONS: Do not increase inflammation

C. Scapular stabilization exercises #2-5

PHASE III (7 to 12 weeks)

- A. STRENGTHENING for all exercises per exercise sheet - exercises 1-8 (impingement protocol)
- Use 2 oz. to 1# weights
 - Patient should experience only minimal pain with exercises or occurring later in the day
- C. Scapular stabilization exercises #6 and 7
- D. May recommend return to weight lifting, but use machines instead, as they have a predetermined path. Less balancing involved.
- E. Also recommend swimming

GOAL: Full AROM by week 12

PRECAUTION: Do not increase inflammation or overwork cuff
4 oz. weight limit until week 8, then progress as tolerated

Stage IV (13-24 weeks)

- A. Progress on rotator cuff exercises with no weight limit. Emphasis is on home program.
- B. Scapular stabilization exercise #8

GOALS: Limited return to work and sports 4-6 months post-op.
Full AROM to pre-set limits.
Home Program: 7 days/week for stretching/ice
4 days/week for strengthening

This protocol provides you with general guidelines for the rehabilitation of the rotator cuff repair shoulder patients. Specific changes in the program will be made by the physician as appropriate for an individual patient. If you have any questions regarding the progress of the patient, the physician should be contacted.