

**REHABILITATION GUIDELINES AFTER
ARTHROSCOPIC SUBACROMIAL DECOMPRESSION**
(With or Without Distal Clavicle Resection)



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The intent of this protocol is to provide the therapist with guidelines of the post-operative rehabilitation course after an arthroscopic 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 therapist should consult the referring physician with any questions or concerns.

FREQUENCY: Weeks 0-4: 3x/week. Weeks 4-12: 2x/week. Weeks 12-16: 1x/week.

INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATIONS:

PHASE I (0-8 weeks)

Goals

- No inflammation.
- Full AROM at 4 weeks with no pain.

Sling

- Wear for 1-2 days for comfort only.

Therapeutic Exercises

- PROM/AAROM (wand exercises)/AROM program – see wand exercise sheet.
- Rotator cuff free weight exercises 4 days per week.

EXERCISES SHOULD BE PAIN FREE

1. Isotonic exercises as tolerated. Start against gravity without weights and progress as tolerated to:
 - a. 2 oz.
 - b. 4 oz
 - c. 8 oz (soup can)
 - d. 1 lb weight
 - e. 2 lb weight, etc.
 2. Repetitions – 25 reps before adding/progressing weights.
- Scapular stabilization exercises.
 - Ice following exercise.
 - Scar mobilization.

PHASE II (8+ weeks)

Goals

- Return to sport or work at 3 months post-op without restrictions.
- Return to work per MD without restrictions.
- 7 days/week for stretching/ice – 4 days/week for strengthening.
- No inflammation.

Therapeutic Exercises

- Progress on rotator cuff free weight program independently 4 days per week.
- Scapular stabilization exercise.
- Goal: 2-3% ideal body weight for 25 reps and maximum weight by 3 months post-op.
- Isometrics – within 5 degrees of pain area in all movements (if isotonic not tolerated).