



Physical Therapy Rotator Cuff Repair
Post-Operative Therapy Plan

Primary Surgery: **Rotator Cuff Repair**
 ___ Small/Moderate (< 5 cm)
 ___ Massive (>5 cm)

Secondary Procedures: _____

Date of Surgery: _____

Surgeon: _____

Physical Therapy start date: _____

Additional Considerations/Precautions (tissue quality, anchor type, etc):



Sling: ___ Small 4 wks (<1.5 cm) ___ Moderate 6 wks ___ Massive 8 wks
Pt to wear sling 24 hours/day. Remove for showering/dressing and PT exercises.

Next Follow Up with MD/PA: _____

SMALL/MODERATE ROTATOR CUFF REPAIR

Precautions: IR in scapular plane to chest (sling position) x 4 wks
 Neutral extension x 4 wks
If biceps tenodesis: Hold AROM (flexion/supination) of elbow x 3 wks; Hold biceps/triceps with resistance x 8 wks
If subscapularis repair: limit extension to neutral x 6 wks, ER to neutral x 4 wks, ER to tolerance x 6 wks, gentle ER stretching >6 wks, NO isolated resistance to IR x 12 wks

Ideally patients should achieve the following milestones before advancing to the next stage.

	Intervention	Milestones
Week 0-4 _____ PROM ONLY	Control pain and inflammation. Elbow/wrist/hand ROM. Postural education/Scapular retraction exercises. At 2 wks begin AAROM ER to 30° in scapular plane. Supine in supported position with neutral extension.	Good pain management. Full elbow/wrist/hand ROM PROM goals: Flexion 0-90° Abd 0-70° ER (scapular plane) 45°
Weeks 4-6 _____	Continue postural and scapular exercises. Add manual resistance for scapular exercises. Begin AROM elbow flexion. Progress shoulder PROM to tolerance .	PROM goals: Flexion 0-120° Abd 0-90° ER (scapular plane) 0-60° IR (scapular plane) 0-30°
Week 6-8 _____	Progress ROM to tolerance . Progress scapular exercises. Begin AAROM shoulder flexion in supine. Progress AAROM to seated position. Initiate submax isometrics. Rhythmic stabilization IR/ER in supine arm supported.	PROM/AAROM goals: Flexion 0-140° Abd 0-120° ER (scapular plane) 0-70° IR (scapular plane) 0-45° Ext 0-45°
Week 8-12 _____	Begin AROM (supine → sidelying → seated/standing). Up to 30 reps for all motions. Progress scapular exercises. Begin gentle closed chain exercises (quadruped). Begin resisted biceps. Rhythmic stabilization supine flexion at 90°.	AROM with good mechanics. NO shoulder shrug. Horizontal adduction to neutral. 3/5 strength for all motions.
Week 12-16 _____	Begin PREs – theraband exercises. Progress horizontal adduction. Progress closed chain exercises as tolerated. Begin PNF patterns.	Full AROM with good mechanics.

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Week 16 (4 mo)	Begin overhead strengthening. Closed chain – full weight bearing. Initiate gym program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Always see back of hand - Chest press to neutral - Avoid machine overhead exercises 	Strength 80% non-op side
Week 20 (5 mo)	Initiate plyometrics 2 hand->one hand Progress power ex	
Week 24 (6 mo)+	Continue strengthening program. Begin interval throwing program.	Overhead athletes and manual laborers: 0/10 pain score Full ROM Strength = non-op side Pass functional testing

Strength gains up to 12 months post-operatively

SMALL/MODERATE ROTATOR CUFF REPAIR
ROM goals – To achieve, NOT exceed

	0-2 wks	2-4 wks	4-6 wks	6-8 wks	8-10 wks	10-12 wks
Flexion/Scaption	To tolerance	To tolerance 0-90°	To tolerance 0-120°	Unlimited 0-140°	Unlimited 0-160°	Unlimited 0-170/180°
Abduction	0-50°	0-70°	0-90°	0-120°	0-150°	0-170/180°
ER in scapular plane	0-30°	0-45°	0-60°	0-70°	0-80°	0-80/90°
IR in scapular plane	Sling Position	Sling Position	0-30°	0-45°	0-60°	0-70°
ER at 60 ABD	None	0-30°	0-60°	0-70°	0-80°	0-80/90°
ER at 90 ABD	None	None	0-45°	0-60°	0-70°	0-80/90°
IR at 90 ABD	None	None	None	0-45°	0-60°	0-70°
Extension	Neutral	Neutral	0-30°	0-45°	0-50°	0-60°

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MASSIVE ROTATOR CUFF REPAIR

Precautions: IR in scapular plane to chest (sling position) x 4 wks
 Neutral extension x 6 wks
If biceps tenodesis: Hold AROM (flexion/supination) of elbow x 3 wks; Hold biceps/triceps with resistance x 8 wks
If subscapularis repair: limit extension to neutral x 6 wks, ER to neutral x 4 wks, ER to tolerance x 6 wks, gentle ER stretching >6 wks, NO isolated resistance to IR x 12 wks

Ideally patients should achieve the following milestones before advancing to the next stage.

	Intervention	Milestones
Week 0-8 _____ PROM ONLY	Control pain and inflammation. Elbow/wrist/hand ROM. Postural education/Scapular retraction exercises. At 3 wks begin AROM elbow flexion. At 4 wks begin AAROM ER to 30° in scapular plane. Supine in supported position with neutral extension. Manual resistance for scapular exercises as progression.	Good pain management. Full elbow/wrist/hand ROM PROM goals: (see progression chart) Flexion 0-130° Abd 0-90° ER (scapular plane) 60°
Weeks 8-10 _____	Continue postural and scapular exercises. Initiate submax isometrics. Begin resisted biceps. Progress shoulder PROM to tolerance . Begin AAROM shoulder flexion to 90° in supine. Rhythmic stabilization IR/ER in supine arm supported.	PROM goals: Flexion 0-150° Abd 0-120° ER (scapular plane) 0-70° IR (scapular plane) 0-60° Ext 0-40°
Week 10-12 _____	Progress ROM to tolerance . Progress scapular exercises. Progress AAROM to seated position. Begin AROM (supine → sidelying → seated/standing). Up to 30 reps for all motions. Begin gentle closed chain exercises (quadruped). Rhythmic stabilization supine flexion at 90°.	PROM/AAROM goals: Flexion 0-170° Abd 0-150° ER (scapular plane) 0-80° IR (scapular plane) 0-70° Ext 0-55° Horizontal adduction to neutral.
Week 12-16 _____	Begin PREs – theraband exercises. Progress horizontal adduction. Progress closed chain exercises as tolerated. Begin PNF patterns.	Full AROM with good mechanics. NO shoulder shrug. 3/5 strength for all motions.
Week 16+ (4 mo) _____	Begin overhead strengthening. Closed chain – full weight bearing. Initiate gym program - Chest press to neutral - Avoid machine overhead exercises	Strength 75% non op side Painfree full AROM

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Week 20 (5 mos)	Begin plyometric ex 2 hand->one hand Begin power progression	Strength 80% non-op side
Week 24 (6 mo)+	Continue strengthening program. Begin interval throwing program.	Overhead athletes and manual laborers: 0/10 pain score Full ROM Strength = non-op side Pass appropriate functional testing and strength testing

Strength gains up to 12 months post-operatively

MASSIVE ROTATOR CUFF REPAIR
ROM goals – To achieve, NOT exceed

	0-2 wks	2-4 wks	4-6 wks	6-8 wks	8-10 wks	10-12 wks
Flexion/Scaption	To tolerance	To tolerance 0-90°	To tolerance 0-110°	Unlimited 0-130°	Unlimited 0-150°	Unlimited 0-170°
Abduction	0-45°	0-60°	0-75°	0-90°	0-120°	0-150°
ER in scapular plane	0-20°	0-40°	0-50°	0-60°	0-70°	0-80°
IR in scapular plane	Sling position	Sling position	0-20°	0-40°	0-60°	0-70°
ER at 60 ABD	None	0-20°	0-40°	0-50°	0-60°	0-70°
ER at 90 ABD	None	None	None	0-40°	0-60°	0-70°
IR at 90 ABD	None	None	None	0-20°	0-45°	0-60°
Extension	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	0-20°	0-40°	0-55°

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