

ROTATOR CUFF REPAIR REHABILITATION GUIDELINES

Phase 1 Protective Phase (0-6 Weeks)

Goals

- Gradual increase in ROM
- Increase shoulder strength
- Decrease pain and inflammation

0-3 Weeks

- Fit brace or sling (physician determines).
- Begin pendulum exercises
- Perform active-assisted ROM exercises (L-bar exercise):
 - Flexion to 125 degrees
 - ER/IR (shoulder at 40 degrees abduction) to 30 degrees
- Perform passive ROM to tolerance.
- Use rope and pulley-flexion.
- Perform elbow-ROM and hand-gripping exercises
- Begin sub-maximal isometrics:
 - Flexors
 - Abductors
 - ER/IR
 - Elbow flexors
- Use ice and pain modalities.

3-6 Weeks

- Discontinue brace or sling @6wks
- Continue all exercises listed above.
- Performed active-assisted ROM exercises:
 - Flexion to 145 degrees
 - ER/IR (performed at 65 degrees abduction) range to tolerance

Phase 2 Intermediate Phase (7-14 Weeks)

Goals

- Full, non-painful ROM (10 Weeks)
- Gradual increase in strength
- Decrease pain

7-10 Weeks

- Perform active-assisted ROM L-bar exercises:
 - Flexion to 160 degrees
 - ER/IR (performed at 90 degrees shoulder abduction) to tolerance (greater than 45 degrees)
- Perform strengthening exercises:
 - Use exercise tubing ER/IR, arm at side.
 - Initiate humeral head stabilizing exercise.
 - Initiate dumbbell-strengthening exercises, for the following:
 - Deltoid
 - Supraspinatus
 - Elbow flexion/extension
 - Scapular muscles

10-14 Weeks

- Continue all exercises listed above (full ROM by 10-12 Weeks)
- Begin isokinetic strengthening (scapular plane).
- Begin side-lying ER/IR exercises (dumbbell).
- Begin neuromuscular control exercises for scapula.

NOTE: Patient must be able to elevate arm without shoulder and scapular hiking before initiating isotonic; if unable, maintain on humeral head stabilizing exercises.

Phase 3 Advanced Strengthening Phase (15-26 Weeks)

Goals

- Maintain full, non-painful ROM
- Improve strength of shoulder
- Improve neuromuscular control
- Gradual return to functional activities

15-20 Weeks

- Continue active-assisted ROM exercise with L-bar:
Flexion, ER, IR
- Perform self-capsular stretches.
- Begin aggressive strengthening program:
Shoulder flexion
Shoulder abduction (to 90 degrees)
Supraspinatus
ER/IR
Elbow flexors/extensors
Scapular Muscles
- Begin interval sports program

21-26 Weeks

- Continue all exercises listed above.
- Use isokinetic test (modified neutral position) for ER/IR at 180 and 300 degrees per second
- Begin interval sport program.

Phase 4 Return to activity Phase (24-28 Weeks)

Goals

- Gradual return to recreational sport activities

24-28 Weeks

- Continue all strengthening exercises.
- Continue all flexibility exercises.
- Continue progression on interval programs.