

## **ARTHROSCOPIC ROTATOR CUFF REPAIR REHABILITATION TYPE 1 PROTOCOL – SMALL TO MEDIUM TEARS**

**Sling with pillow on at all times except showers and PT/home exercises for first 4 weeks. Ok to discontinue pillow and just wear sling for following 2 weeks. 6 weeks total of sling wear.**

### **Phase I - Immediate Post-Surgical Phase (Weeks 1-2)**

Goals: Maintain Integrity of the Repair  
Gradually Increase Passive Range of Motion  
Diminish Pain and Inflammation  
Prevent Muscular Inhibition

### **Precautions:**

1. No Lifting of Objects
2. No Excessive Shoulder Motion Behind Back
3. No Excessive Stretching or Sudden Movements
4. No Supporting of Body Weight by Hands
5. Keep Incision Clean & Dry

### **Week 1:**

- Sling
- Pendulum Exercises 4-8x daily (flexion, circles)
- Active Assisted ROM Exercise (L-Bar)
  - ER/IR in Scapular Plane
- Passive ROM
  - Flexion to tolerance
  - ER/IR in Scapular Plane
- Elbow/Hand Gripping & ROM Exercises
- Submaximal & Painfree Isometrics
  - Flexion
  - Abduction
  - External Rotation
  - Internal Rotation
  - Elbow Flexors
- Cryotherapy for Pain and Inflammation
  - Ice 15-20 minutes every hour
- Sleeping
  - Sleep in Sling

### **Week 2:**

- Continue Pendulum Exercises
- Progress Passive ROM to Tolerance
  - Flexion to at least 115 degrees
  - ER in Scapular Plane to 45-55 degrees
  - IR in Scapular Plane to 45-55 degrees

- Active Assisted ROM Exercises (L-bar)
  - ER/IR in Scapular Plane
  - Flexion to Tolerance\*

\*Therapist Provides Assistance by Supporting Arm
- Continue Elbow/Hand ROM & Gripping Exercises
- Continue Isometrics
  - Flexion with Bent Elbow
  - Extension with Bent Elbow
  - Abduction with Bent Elbow
  - ER/IR with Arm in Scapular Plane
  - Elbow Flexion
  - May initiate ER/IR tubing at 0 degrees Abduction, if patient exhibits necessary AROM
- Continue Use of Ice for Pain Control
  - Use Ice at least 6-7 times daily
- Sleeping
  - Continue Sleeping in Sling until Physician Instructs

## II. **Phase II - Protection Phase (Week 2-Week 6)**

Goals: Allow Healing of Soft Tissue  
Do Not Overstress Healing Tissue  
Gradually Restore Full Passive ROM (Week 2-3)  
Re-Establish Dynamic Shoulder Stability  
Decrease Pain & Inflammation

### **Precautions:**

1. No Heavy Lifting of Objects
2. No Supporting of Body Weight by Hands & Arms
3. No Sudden Jerking Motions

### **Week 2-3:**

- Passive Range of Motion to Tolerance
  - Flexion 0-145/160 degrees
  - ER at 90 degrees abduction to at least 75-80 degrees
  - IR at 90 degrees abduction to at least 55-60 degrees
- Active Assisted ROM to Tolerance
  - Flexion
  - ER/IR in Scapular Plane
  - ER/IR at 90 degrees Abduction
- Dynamic Stabilization Drills
  - Rhythmic Stabilization Drills
    - ER/IR in Scapular Plane
    - Flexion/Extension at 100 degrees Flexion
- Continue Isotonic ER/IR with Tubing
- Initiate Active Exercise Prone Rowing & Elbow Flexion
- Initiate Active Exercise Flexion & Abduction (Day 15)
- Continue Use of Cryotherapy

**Week 3 - 4:**

- Patient should exhibit full passive range of motion, nearing full active range of motion
- Continue all exercises listed above
- Initiate Scapular Muscular Strengthening Program
- Initiate Sidelying ER Strengthening (Light Dumbbell)
- Initiate Isotonic Elbow Flexion
- Continue use of ice as needed
- May use pool for light ROM exercises

**Week 5:**

- Patient should exhibit full active range of motion
- Continue AAROM and Stretching exercises
- Progress Isotonic Strengthening Exercise Program
  - ER Tubing
  - Sidelying ER
  - Prone Rowing
  - Prone Horizontal Abduction
  - Shoulder Flexion (Scapular Plane)
  - Shoulder Abduction
  - Biceps Curls

**III. Phase III – Intermediate Phase (Week 6-12)**

Goals: Gradual Restoration of Shoulder Strength & Power  
Gradual Return to Functional Activities

**Week 6:**

- Continue Stretching & PROM (as needed to maintain full ROM)
- Continue Dynamic Stabilization Drills
- Progress Isotonic Strengthening Program
  - ER/IR Tubing
  - ER Sidelying
  - Lateral Raises
  - Full Can in Scapular Plane
  - Prone Rowing
  - Prone Horizontal Abduction
  - Prone Extension
  - Elbow Flexion
  - Elbow Extension
- If physician permits, may initiate Light functional activities

**Week 8-10:**

- Continue all exercise listed above
- Progress to Independent Home Exercise Program (Fundamental Shoulder Exercises)
- Initiate Interval Golf Program (Slow Rate of Progression)

**IV. Phase IV – Advanced Strengthening Phase (Week 12 - 20)**

Goals: Maintain Full Non-Painful Active ROM  
Enhance Functional Use of UE  
Improve Muscular Strengthen & Power  
Gradual Return to Functional Activities

**Week 12:**

- Continue ROM & Stretching to maintain full ROM
- Self Capsular Stretches
- Progress Shoulder Strengthening Exercises
  - Fundamental Shoulder Exercises
- Initiate Swimming or Tennis Program (if appropriate)

**Week 15:**

- Continue all exercises listed above
- Progress Golf Program to playing golf (if appropriate)

**V. Phase V – Return to Activity Phase (Week 20 - 26)**

Goals: Gradual Return to Strenuous Work Activities  
Gradual Return to Recreational Sport Activities

**Week 20:**

- Continue Fundamental Shoulder Exercise Program (at least 4 times weekly)
- Continue Stretching, if motion is tight
- Continue Progression to Sport Participation

