

### Small and Medium Rotator Cuff Repair Protocol

Individual patient circumstances may affect the guideline (tear configuration, fixation used, associated procedures, etc.)

Time	Goals	Precautions/Restrictions	Treatment
<b>Weeks 0 – 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect surgical site</li> <li>• Limit post-op pain</li> <li>• Decrease muscular inhibition</li> <li>• Passive flexion to 90°</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sling at all times</li> <li>• Consider sleeping in recliner</li> <li>• PROM only</li> <li>• Avoid ER ROM if subscapularis was repaired</li> <li>• Avoid AROM elbow flexion with biceps tenodesis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PRICE               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Cryotherapy: 5-7 times per day</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Pendulum exercises</li> <li>• AROM: elbow, wrist and hand</li> <li>• PROM: shoulder</li> <li>• Scapular exercises: shrugs, depression, retraction, and protraction</li> <li>• Modalities: e-stim, heat, ice as needed</li> <li>• Cardio: walking, stationary or recumbent bike with sling</li> </ul>
<b>Weeks 4 – 8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect surgical site</li> <li>• Passive forward elevation up to 90-120°</li> <li>• Passive ER in neutral to 20-30°</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May discontinue sling at 6 weeks</li> <li>• May initiate ER ROM if subscapularis repair</li> <li>• Therapist guided AROM at 6 weeks</li> <li>• PROM or AAROM only</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress PROM as tolerated</li> <li>• Modalities, Mobilizations as needed</li> <li>• Initiate AAROM with wand               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Supine -&gt; Standing</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Wand or pulley for AAROM</li> <li>• Initiate therapist guided AROM at 6 weeks</li> <li>• Initiate isometric strengthening at neutral abduction at 6 weeks</li> </ul>
<b>Weeks 8 – 12</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiate light strengthening</li> <li>• Motion goals:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Passive forward elevation to 140°</li> <li>○ Passive ER within 5-10° of contralateral limb</li> <li>○ Active elevation to 120°</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid heavy lifting</li> <li>• Avoid pushing body weight</li> <li>• Avoid jogging</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue AROM as tolerated</li> <li>• Continue isometric strengthening in neutral</li> <li>• Rotator cuff strengthening with bands in non-provocative positions at week 10</li> <li>• Continue with scapular strengthening</li> <li>• AAROM exercises: pulley, cane forward elevation, wall walks or slides</li> <li>• Cardio: walking, stationary bike; avoid running, stairmaster, swimming</li> </ul>
<b>Weeks 12 – 16</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restore AROM</li> <li>• Restore strength and endurance</li> <li>• Return to ADLs, work, and recreational activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid lifting heavy objects with long lever</li> <li>• Avoid sudden lifting, jerking, or pushing movements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue with ROM as tolerated</li> <li>• Progress open-chain strengthening to dumbbells               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Overhead/Long-lever 1-2 pounds</li> <li>○ Below shoulder height 5-10 pounds</li> </ul> </li> <li>• May initiate shoulder perturbations or rhythmic stabilizations</li> <li>• Initiate closed-chain strengthening:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Wall pushups, progress to table top as tolerated</li> <li>○ Serratus anterior push-ups</li> <li>○ Serratus punches</li> <li>○ Quadruped weight-shifting</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Weeks 16+</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to progress return to work or sport-specific training</li> <li>• Restore AROM</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid large increases in volume</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue with end-range ROM or mobilizations</li> <li>• Continue progressive resistive exercises in various shoulder positions</li> <li>• Progress closed-chain strengthening</li> <li>• ARC program</li> </ul>

This guideline is not meant to be prescriptive but a recommendation to the rehabilitation process. Progress may vary based on specifics of injury and procedure.