Jennifer Thomson, MD
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY | SPORTS MEDICINE

Rehabilitation Protocol:
Rotator Cuff Repair (Large & Massive Tears)

Precautions

Distal Clavicle Excision	- Hold horizontal cross body adduction until 8 weeks
Biceps Tenodesis	- Limit active elbow flexion of biceps beyond 90 deg & limit eccentric loads on biceps for 6 wks postop - Avoid abduction and 90/90 ER until 8 wks - No resisted elbow flexion until 8 wks

Phase I: 0-6 weeks

- Brace: Shoulder immobilizer at all times except during exercise & hygiene
- ROM:
> active/passive elbow/wrist/hand ROM
> Weeks 0-2: No ROM except gentle passive home exercises
> Weeks 2-4: True passive (ONLY) ROM of shoulder. NO ACTIVE MOTION.
- Weightbearing: Non-weightbearing
- Exercises:
-- Weeks 0-2:
  - Pendulums
  - Grip strengthening
-- Weeks 2-6:
  - Pendulums
  - Codman's
  - Avoid stretch of anterior capsule and extension
  - Supine elevation in scapular plane to max 140 degrees
  - ER to 40 deg with arm at side
  - Scapular stabilization exercises (side-lying)
  - Deltoid isometrics in neutral (submaximal) as ROM improves
  - No pulley/canes until 6 wks post-op (these include active motions)

Phase II: 6-8 weeks

- Brace: Discontinue shoulder immobilizer
- ROM:
> Continue elbow/wrist/hand ROM
> Begin active assist shoulder ROM
- Weightbearing: <5 lbs
- Exercises:
  - Elevation in scapular plane and external rotation as tolerated
  - No internal rotation or behind back until 6 wks

Phase III: 8-12 weeks

- Brace: None
- ROM:
> Active assist to active ROM of shoulder as tolerated

Phone: 201-639-6620

Jennifer Thomson, MD
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY | SPORTS MEDICINE

> Elevation in scapular plane and external rotation to tolerance
> Begin internal rotation as tolerated
- Weightbearing: <5 lbs
- Exercises:
    - Light stretching at end ranges
    - Begin active assisted exercises
    - Begin deltoid and cuff isometrics at 6 wks with arm at the side in neutral
    - Light upper body ergometer

Phase IV: 12-16 weeks

- Brace: None
- ROM: advance to full ROM as tolerated with passive stretching at end ranges
- Weightbearing: advance as tolerated
- Exercises:
    - Emphasize external rotation and latissimus eccentrics
    - Glenohumeral stabilization
    - Upper body ergometer
    - Light endurance strengthening
    - Cycling/running as tolerated at 12 wks
    - Advance strengthening as tolerated: isometrics -> bands -> light weights (1-5 lbs); 8-12 reps/3 sets per rotator cuff, deltoid, scapular stabilizers
    - Only do strengthening 3x/wk to avoid rotator cuff tendonitis

Phase V: 4-12 months

- Brace: None
- ROM: full
- Weightbearing: advance as tolerated
- Exercises:
    - Begin eccentrically resisted motions, scapular perturbation, plyometrics (eg, weighted ball toss), proprioception (eg, body blade)
    - Begin sports-related rehab at 4.5 months, including advanced conditioning
    - Return to throwing at 6 months
    - Throw from pitcher's mound at 9 months
    - Collision sports at 9 months
    - MMI is usually at 12 months post-op

Return to sport as guided by surgeon

Phone: 201-639-6620