



Patient Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Patient DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Rehabilitation Following Arthroscopic Rotator Cuff Repair (Medium to Large Tears)

Visits: \_\_\_\_\_ Frequency: \_\_\_\_\_/week Duration: \_\_\_\_\_ weeks

Evaluate and treat  Home program

Phase I - Immediate Post-Surgical Phase (Days 1-14)

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

Days One to Six:

- Abduction pillow brace
Pendulum Exercises
Active Assisted ROM Exercise (L-Bar)
ER/IR in Scapular Plane at 45 degrees of abduction (pain-free ROM)
Passive ROM
Flexion to tolerance (painful ROM)
ER/IR in Scapular Plane at 45 degrees of abduction (pain-free ROM)
Elbow/Hand Gripping & ROM Exercises
Submaximal Pain-free Isometrics (initiate days 4-5)
Flexion with elbow bent to 90 degrees
External Rotation
Internal Rotation
Elbow Flexors
Cryotherapy for Pain and Inflammation
Ice 15-20 minutes every hour
Sleeping
Sleep in pillow brace

Days Seven to Fourteen:

- Continue use of pillow brace
Pendulum Exercises
Progress Passive ROM to Tolerance
Flexion to at least 115 degrees
ER in Scapular Plane at 45 degrees abduction to 20-25 degrees
IR in Scapular Plane at 45 degrees abduction to 30-35 degrees
Active Assisted ROM Exercises (L-bar)
ER/IR in Scapular Plane at 45 degrees abduction
Flexion to Tolerance\*
\*Therapist Provides Assistance by Supporting Arm (esp. with arm lowering)
Continue Elbow/Hand ROM & Gripping Exercises
Continue Isometrics (submaximal and subpainful)
Flexion with Bent Elbow
Extension with Bent Elbow
Abduction with Bent Elbow
ER/IR with Arm in Scapular Plane
Elbow Flexion
Initiate rhythmic stabilization ER/IR at 45 degrees abduction
Continue Use of Ice for Pain Control
Use Ice at least 6-7 times daily
Sleeping - Continue Sleeping in Brace until Physician Instructs

**Precautions:**

- No Lifting of Objects
- No Excessive Shoulder Extension
- No Excessive Stretching or Sudden Movements
- No Supporting of Body Weight by Hands
- Keep Incision Clean & Dry

**Phase II - Protection Phase (Day 15 – Week 6)**

- Goals:** Allow Healing of Soft Tissue  
Do Not Overstress Healing Tissue  
Gradually Restore Full Passive ROM (Week 4-5)  
Re-Establish Dynamic Shoulder Stability  
Decrease Pain & Inflammation

**Days 15 – 28:**

- Continue Use of Sling or Brace (physician or therapist will determine when to discontinue)
- Passive Range of Motion to Tolerance
- Flexion to 140-155 degrees
- ER at 90 degrees abduction to at least 45 degrees
- IR at 90 degrees abduction to at least 45 degrees
- Active Assisted ROM to Tolerance
- Flexion (continue use of arm support)
- ER/IR in Scapular Plane at 45 degrees abduction
- ER/IR at 90 degrees Abduction
- Dynamic Stabilization Drills
- Rhythmic Stabilization Drills
- ER/IR in Scapular Plane
- Flexion/Extension at 100 degrees Flexion and 125 degrees flexion
- Continue All Isometric Contractions
- Initiate scapular isometrics
- Continue Use of Cryotherapy as needed
- Continue All Precautions
- No lifting
- No excessive motion

**Weeks 4 - 5:**

- Patient should exhibit full passive range of motion by week 4
- Continue all exercises listed above
- Initiate ER/IR strengthening using exercise tubing at 0 degrees of abduction (use towel roll)
- Initiate Manual Resistance ER Supine in Scapular Plane (light resistance)
- Initiate Prone Rowing to Neutral arm Position
- Initiate prone shoulder extension
- Initiate ER strengthening exercises
- Initiate Isotonic Elbow Flexion
- Continue use of ice as needed
- May use heat prior to ROM exercises
- May use pool for light AROM exercises
- Rhythmic stabilization exercises (flexion 45, 90, 125 degrees) (ER/IR)

**Weeks 5 – 6:**

- May use heat prior to exercises
- Continue AAROM and Stretching exercises
- Especially for movements that are not full
- Shoulder flexion
- ER at 90 degrees abduction
- Initiate Active ROM Exercises
- Shoulder Flexion Scapular Plane
- Shoulder Abduction
- Progress Isotonic Strengthening Exercise Program
- ER Tubing
- Side-lying IR
- Prone Rowing
- Prone Horizontal Abduction (bent elbow)
- Biceps Curls (isotonics)

**Precautions:**

- No Heavy Lifting of Objects
- No excessive behind the back movements
- No Supporting of Body Weight by Hands & Arms
- No Sudden Jerking Motions

**Phase III – Intermediate Phase (Weeks 7-14)**

- Goals:** Full Active ROM (Week 8-10)  
Maintain Full Passive ROM  
Dynamic Shoulder Stability  
Gradual Restoration of Shoulder Strength  
Gradual Return to Functional Activities

**Week 7:**

- Continue Stretching & PROM (as needed to maintain full ROM)
  - Continue Dynamic Stabilization Drills
  - Progress Strengthening Program
  - ER/IR Tubing
  - ER Side-lying
  - Lateral Raises\*
  - Full Can in Scapular Plane\*
  - Prone Rowing
  - Prone Horizontal Abduction
  - Prone Extension
  - Elbow Flexion
  - Elbow Extension
- \*Patient must be able to elevate arm without shoulder or scapular hiking before initiating isotonic; if unable, continue glenohumeral joint exercises.

**Week 8:**

- Continue all exercise listed above
- If physician permits, may initiate Light functional activities

**Week 10:**

- Continue all exercise listed above
- Progress to Fundamental Shoulder Exercises
- Therapist may initiate isotonic resistance (1 lb wt. limit) during flexion and abduction\*
- \*If non-painful normal motion is exhibited!

**Weeks 11-14:**

- Progress all exercises
- Continue ROM and flexibility exercises
- Progress strengthening program (increase 1 lb/10 days \*non-painful)

**Phase IV – Advanced Strengthening Phase (Weeks 15 - 22)**

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

**Week 15:**

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

**Weeks 20- 22**

- Continue all exercises listed above
- Progress Golf Program to playing golf (if appropriate)
- Initiate Interval Tennis Program (if appropriate)
- May Initiate Swimming

**Phase V – Return to Activity Phase (Weeks 23 - 36)**

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

**Week 23:**

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

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Date

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