

Complex Rotator Cuff Repair Rehabilitation Protocol

Phase	Goals	Precautions/Restrictions	Treatment
Weeks 0-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect surgical site Decrease pain and inflammation PRICE principles Minimize muscle atrophy No shoulder range of motion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No lifting of any object on surgical side No lifting greater than 5 lbs on uninvolved side No pushing/pulling greater than 20 lbs on uninvolved side No excessive arm motions Wear immobilizer with bolster except for hygiene and exercise performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shoulder arm hang exercises Active assisted range of motion of elbow, wrist and hand Scapular retraction isometrics Week 2-3: May begin stationary bike <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No use of handle bars Cryotherapy: 5-7times per day Initial visit: QuickDASH, FOTO PRO
Weeks 6-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain integrity of repair Initiate PROM to AAROM to AROM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Functional AROM at week 16 Functional scapular mechanics at week 16 Initiate muscle activation Improve motor control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sling worn for comfort beginning week 6, wean as tolerated Do not force motion No weight bearing through involved shoulder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Week 6: Supine passive range of motion in all planes of motion Scapular retraction AROM Week 8: AAROM initiated once PROM achieved Week 8: Core/LE training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No stress to repair Single plane/multi joint exercises Balance/proprioception Week 10: Shoulder isometrics may be initiated Week 10: AROM initiated once AAROM achieved Week 12: Rhythmic stabilization may be initiated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IR/ER at 45 degrees in scapular plane Flexion at 100 degrees Continue with stationary bike <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to 30 minutes Modalities as needed Week 6: QuickDASH, FOTO PRO
Weeks 16-24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain integrity of repair Initiate RTC exercises Initiate scapular stabilizer strengthening Range of motion without compensation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not force motion No weight bearing through involved shoulder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Week 16: Continue AROM Week 16: Advancement to isotonic exercise per tolerance in all planes, including multiplane exercises provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isometrics progressing No compensations during exercise Modalities as needed Week 16: QuickDASH, FOTO PRO

This protocol is not meant to be prescriptive but a recommendation to guide the rehabilitation process.
 Each patient's progress may vary based on specifics to their injury and procedure.



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- Weeks 24+
- Initiate return to sport progression
 - Initiate plyometric exercise progression
 - Initiate higher level impact activity
 - Focus on form and control during exercise performance
 - Use of appropriate work rest intervals
 - Assess tolerance to activity during, after and at 24 hours after activity
 - Low level sport specific activity, progressing to higher demand activity
 - Continue with Anaerobic and aerobic interval training
 - Continue with core stability per tolerance
 - Multiple planes
 - Stability in all 3 planes of motion
 - Sport specific movements when able
 - Plyometric activities progressing from simple to complex, less load to more load
 - Week 24: QuickDASH, FOTO PRO
 - Week 24: HHD/isokinetic testing
 - 1 year follow up: HHD testing

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