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excellence in orthopedics & sports medicine

## Arthroscopic Rotator Cuff Rehabilitation – Large / Massive Repair

**Preoperative:** Must restore at least 80% passive range of motion prior to surgery

### **Phase I: Immediate postoperative phase (days 1–7)**

#### **Goals**

- Control pain and swelling
- Begin gentle passive motion

#### **Brace/Modalities**

- UltraSling worn at all times except for bathing and prescribed exercises
- Cryotherapy 4 times per day for 20 minutes each

#### **Exercises**

- Elbow and wrist range of motion as tolerated
- Grip/squeeze exercises

### **Phase II: Early Phase (weeks 2–6)**

#### **Goals**

- **Passive** range of motion approximately 50% of normal in all planes **at 6 weeks**
- **No active ROM**

#### **Brace/Modalities**

- Continue UltraSling at all times until 6 weeks then discontinue

#### **Exercises**

- Gentle (supine preferred) passive range of motion exercises flexion, extension, abduction begin at 3 weeks; each stretch with mild to moderate pressure and held for 20 - 25 seconds
- Periscapular isometrics, gentle elbow and wrist strengthening exercises
- Independent home exercises above, 4 times / day

### **Phase III: Motion Phase (weeks 7–12 weeks)**

#### **Goals**

- Restore 80 - 90% passive ROM by end of week 12

#### **Exercises**

- Continue passive ROM exercises 4 times per day to now include internal and external rotation (unless otherwise restricted by Dr. Angelo)
- Begin gentle active ROM at week 10 (**No lifting of any weight**)
- Continue scapular strengthening

### **Phase IV: Progression Phase (weeks 13–24 weeks)**

#### **Goals**

- Gradual improvement in rotator cuff and scapular strength
- Progress to independent home program

**Exercises**

- Rotator cuff and scapular strengthening exercises with light but progressive resistance
- Maintain ROM
- Begin light isometrics and resistive band exercises for flexion, extension, external rotation, and internal rotation **no sooner than 12 weeks**

**Shoulder Function**

- Begin light functional activities at 20 weeks, i.e. golf chipping and pitching

**Phase V: Return to Function (weeks 25–36 weeks)**

**Goals:**

- **May be limited** and determined in part by the quality of rotator cuff tissue and size / extent of the tear (Dr. Angelo will counsel)
- Function progresses commensurate with overall shoulder strength and mobility

**Criteria:**

- Minimal pain
- Full or nearly full range of motion (unless goals are limited)
- Rotator cuff and scapular strengthening within one grade of opposite shoulder
- Clearance by Dr. Angelo