

ROTATOR CUFF REPAIR REHAB PROTOCOL

PHASE ONE: Protective Phase (Weeks 0-6)

Goals:

- Protect integrity of the repair
- Decrease pain and inflammation
- Gradually increase in ROM
- Retard muscle atrophy

Precautions:

- **No active abduction or forward flexion**
- Patients are allowed to reach to their face, but are instructed to avoid external rotation or reaching above their head
- Sling may be discontinued as pain permits

Exercises:

- Pendulums
- Self-PROM Flexion in Supine to a maximum of 90 degrees
- Scapular Isometrics (primarily retraction)
- Elbow, Wrist, Hand AROM
- Modalities as needed

PHASE TWO: INTERMEDIATE PHASE (WEEKS 6-10)

Goals:

- Decrease pain and inflammation
- Restore full PROM and AROM
- Gradual increase in strength

Precautions:

- Patients are not allowed to lift weight above the shoulder
- Patients should not lift >5 pounds

Early Intermediate Phase (Weeks 5-7)

- Continue PROM as needed to achieve and maintain full ROM
- Initiate AAROM exercises progressing to AROM as tolerated
- Initiate gentle rhythmic stabilization exercises
- Strengthening exercises for the hand, wrist, elbow, and scapular musculature
(Note: Biceps strengthening should be deferred until 8 weeks if patient underwent tenodesis)
- Modalities as needed

Late Intermediate Phase (Weeks 8-10)

- Continue PROM, AAROM, AROM to achieve and maintain full ROM
- Continue distal Upper Extremity and scapular strengthening
- Continue rhythmic stabilization
- Initiate strengthening exercises with weights/theraband progressing as tolerated
- Modalities as needed

PHASE THREE: ADVANCED PHASE (Weeks 10-Discharge)

Goals:

- Maintain full, non-painful AROM
- Improve shoulder strengthening
- Improve neuromuscular control
- Gradual return to functional activities

Expectations:

- 10-12 weeks - Patient should have achieved full active and passive range of motion
- 12-16 weeks - Patients should be nearing normal strength and full range of motion

Early Advanced Phase (Weeks 10-12):

- Continue and advance exercises above
- General conditioning program

Late Advanced Phase (Weeks 12-Discharge)

- Continue all strengthening exercises
- Continue all flexibility exercises
- Gradual progression of functional activities per patient needs