



*New England Shoulder and Elbow Center*

## Lower Trapezius Tendon Transfer

### Phase I (0-5 weeks): Protected Phase

#### GOALS:

- ◆ Protect surgical repair
- ◆ Decrease pain/ inflammation
- ◆ Gradually increase shoulder range of motion (ROM)
- ◆ Improve proximal (scapula) and distal strength and mobility
- ◆ Independence in a home exercise program (HEP)

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND PRECAUTIONS:

- Keep gunslinger brace on at all times when not performing exercises
- NO active movements at the operated shoulder joint other than gentle self-care activity below shoulder level
- Begin distal extremity exercises with elbow, wrist, and hand active range of motion 3x a day
- Cold flow system or direct site icing should be utilized 3-4x a day for 20 minutes at a time to help decrease pain and inflammation
- Sling may be discontinued at 5 weeks

### Phase II (6-12 weeks): Progressive ROM Phase

#### GOALS:

- ◆ Eliminate/ minimize pain and inflammation
- ◆ Passive range of motion (PROM) to 120°
- ◆ Gradual return to light ADLs below 90° elevation
- ◆ Normal scapulo-humeral rhythm below 90° elevation

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND PRECAUTIONS:

- Continue elbow, wrist, and hand exercises from Phase I
- PROM of elbow in external rotation as tolerated
- 5lb lifting restriction in place



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- Begin active assisted range of motion (AAROM) and active range of motion (AROM) exercises – includes pulleys, wand, and supine gravity assisted exercises. Joint mobilization by PT, humeral head rhythmic stabilization exercises by PT, hydrotherapy if available, modalities for pain and edema, patient education for activity modifications. All motions except internal rotation (IR) or behind the back until 3 months
- Isolate and strengthen scapular stabilizers.
- Progress PROM and capsular stretching of the shoulder as needed – elevation and external rotation as tolerated
- Avoid resisted training or strengthening. Avoid AROM in positions of subacromial impingement.

Phase III (12-16 weeks):

GOALS:

- ◆ Improve strength to 5/5 for scapula and shoulder musculature
- ◆ Improve neuromuscular control
- ◆ Normalize scapulo-humeral rhythm throughout the full ROM
- ◆ Achieve Full Forward Elevation AROM to 160 degrees

RECOMMENDATIONS AND PRECAUTIONS:

- Continue exercises from Phase II
- Begin progressive rotator cuff and shoulder strengthening at 3 months with isometric exercises.
- Equate active and passive range of motion. Encourage scapulohumeral mechanics during active shoulder motion.
- Simulate work/recreational activities as rotator cuff strength and endurance improve.

Phase IV (16+ weeks):

GOALS:

- ◆ Maximize flexibility, strength & neuromuscular control to meet demands of sport, return to work, recreational and daily activity
- ◆ Isokinetic testing - 85% limb symmetry
- ◆ Independent in home & gym therapeutic exercise programs for maintenance and progression of functional level at discharge



RECOMMENDATIONS AND PRECAUTIONS:

- Continue exercises from Phase III
- Initiate isotonic strengthening at 4-5 months (Theraband, dumbbells, Hughston's exercises, etc). Include home cuff strengthening program.
- Continue to emphasize scapular stabilizers.
- Simulate work/recreational activities as shoulder strength improves

CRITERIA FOR DISCHARGE:

- ⇒ Isokinetic testing near normal ER/IR ratios (66%), 85% symmetry
- ⇒ Independence with home/gym program at discharge for maintenance and progression of flexibility, strength and neuromuscular control

Patient Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Physician's  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ M.D. Date: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_