**Rotator Cuff Repair Rehabilitation Protocol**

**General notes:**

“As tolerated” should be understood to be with safety for the rotator cuff repair; pain, swelling, or other undesirable factors are indicators that you are doing too much too soon. If any of these should occur, decrease activity level, ice.

Ice should be applied to the shoulder for 15-20 minutes following each exercise, therapy, or training session.

Return to sport based on provider team (physician, physician assistant, athletic trainer, therapist) input and appropriate testing.

All times and exercises are to serve as guidelines. Actual progress may be faster or slower, depending on each individual patient, as agreed upon by the patient and his/her team of providers

**Phase I – Post-op Phase weeks 0 to 2:**

**Brace:** Wear sling, keep immobilized at all times except when doing exercises

**ROM (range of motion) Goals:**

* Passive (someone moves arm for you) flexion (raising arm forward) to tolerance
* Passive abduction (arm moved away from side of body), determined following surgery
* Passive external rotation (arm turned away from side of body) determined following surgery.

**Therapeutic Exercises: Strengthening:** Finger, wrist and elbow motions; shoulder pendulum motion

**Cryotherapy (Ice treatments):** Six to eight times a day for 20 minutes

**Phase II -** Early Motion Phase, Weeks 2 to 4

**Brace:** Continue with Ultrasling, maintain immobilized at all times except when doing exercises

**ROM Goals:**

* Passive ROM to 90 degrees abduction, 90 degrees forward flexion
* active assisted (involved arm does some of the work, helped by other side) flexion as tolerated

**Therapeutic Exercises: Strengthening:** Continue finger, wrist and elbow motions; shoulder pendulum motion, ADD periscapular isometrics

**Conditioning:** Stationary bike, elliptical machine, stepper with Ultrasling on

**Manual Therapy:**  scar tissue massage

**Phase III -** Motion Phase, Weeks 4 to 6

**Brace:** continue with sling

**ROM Goals:**

* Full passive ROM
* Active assisted ROM to 90 degrees abduction, 90 degrees forward flexion, 45 degrees internal and external rotation
* Passive external rotation determined following surgery.

**Therapeutic Exercises: Strengthening:** Continue shoulder isometric exercises; continue strengthening finger, wrist and elbow motions; shoulder pendulum motion

**Conditioning:** stationary bike, elliptical machine, stepper

**Manual Therapy:** scar tissue massage

**Phase IV -** Activity Phase, Weeks 6 to 10

**Brace:** discontinue once protective strength exists

**ROM Goals:**

* Full active ROM in all directions

**Therapeutic Exercises: Strengthening:** Gradually begin resistance exercises for rotator cuff; begin core strength training

**Proprioception:** Begin diagonal function patterns **Conditioning:** begin treadmill walking; continue stationary bike, elliptical machine, stepper

**Manual Therapy:** as needed

**Phase V -** Sport Phase, Weeks 14 to 18

**Therapeutic Exercises: Strengthening:**

* Add closed chain and plyometric exercises; progress resistance exercises for rotator cuff; continue finger, wrist and elbow motions

**Proprioception:** Continue diagonal function patterns **Conditioning:** Begin straight running; continue stationary bike, elliptical machine, stepper

**Manual Therapy:** as needed

**Phase VI -** Return to Sport, Weeks 18+

**Therapeutic Exercises: Strengthening:** Continue/progress closed chain and plyometric exercises, resistance exercises for rotator cuff

**Proprioception:** Progress diagonal function patterns **Conditioning:** Begin cutting running; continue stationary bike, elliptical machine, stepper

**Manual Therapy:** as needed