

Rotator Cuff Repair Protocol Craig Weil, MD

Phase I: PROTECTION

Small tears: weeks 0-1

Large tears: week 0-3 TO 0-8

The time for each phase is an approximation and will vary from patient to patient. Each patient will advance through the phases as the patient is cleared for the activities of that particular phase

Home exercises

- 1. Ball squeezes
- 2. 3 way wrist curls*
- 3. Pronation/Supination*
- 4. Codman's pendulum

(* with forearm supported)

Patient to ice shoulder for 10-20 minutes 2 times per day or as needed to decrease pain

Clinic

- 1. Review home ex program, modify as indicated
- 2. Modalities for tissue healing and pain control
- 3. PROM / Grade I mobilization
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Goals

- 1. Decrease pain and muscle guarding
- 2. Protect repair
- 3. Prevent distal contracture / atrophy

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Phase II: PROM/AAROM

Small tears: weeks 1-3

Large tears: week 3-6

Home exercises

Continue phase I exercises

Add:

- 1. Scapular AROM (Shrugs, retraction)
- 2. Supine wand stretches (pain free; gradual progress)
- 3. Pulley flex/abd PROM
- 4. Ice shoulder in protected position post exercise

Clinic

- 1. Mobilization techniques to improve ROM
- 2. Scapular PNF AROM
- 3. UBE/Airdyne (PROM surgical/non surgical arm AROM)
- 4. Sub max isometrics into flex/abd/ext/IR/ER
- 5. CPM flex/ext in pain free ROM (isokinetic device)
- 6. Modalities for tissue healing and pain control

Goals

- 1. PROM: increase by 10 degrees per week with full PROM by 12 weeks
- 2. Decrease pain and muscle guarding
- 3. Facilitate transition to AROM exercise

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Phase III: AROM

Small tears: weeks 4-8

Large tears: weeks 7-11

Home exercises

Continue current exercise and ice program

Add:

- 1. Progressive ROM activity
 - wall walking
 - Neer III stretches for ER, flex/abd, flex
 - static stretches for ER, flex, abd
 - Self mobilization for inf/post glides
- 2. AROM exercise (per tolerance/pain free/good mechanics!)
 - Prone rows, SLER, flex, abd, empty can, scaption, IR with theraband

Clinic

- 1. Mobilization techniques for ROM as needed
- 2. PNF patterns gh joint progressing from min assist->minimal resistance
- 3. UBE/airdyne AROM (light resistance)
- 4. Russian ES as needed to assist normal gh rhythm

Goals

- 1. PROM WNL's all planes
- 2. AROM to 90 degrees flex/abd

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Phase IV: Functional Progression

Small tears: weeks 9-12

Large Tears: weeks 12-15

Home exercises

- 1. RTC stretching for inf/post/anterior capsule (as needed)
- 2. AROM RTC exercises from Phase III with increased ROM and resistance
- 3. Add isometric dips in sitting
- 4. Ice post exercise

Clinic

- 1. Add resistance to AROM ex's in 1 lb increments and increase reps towards 2 sets of 20.
- 2. UBE with moderate resistance
- 3. Gym exercises (i.e. rowing, chest press, LPD, upright rows) Per ability!
- 4. Impulse IR/ER at neutral
- 5. Isokinetics 240 and 120 degrees per sec IR/ER
- 6. Proprioceptive exercise (ballistic theraband, wall dribbles, Body Blade, etc)

Goals

- 1. AROM WNL's
- 2. Restore normal gh-scapular rhythm

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Phase V: PRE's and Isokinetics

Small tears: 3 months +

Large Tears: 4-5 months +

Home exercises

- 1. Continue to progress core exercises in 1 lb increments
- 2. Continue with stretches to maintain full ROM
- 3. Continue to ice post exercise
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Clinic

- 1. Add Machined-defined (ex Nautilus) machines:
- Lat pulldown *
- Lat pullover *

(*Initially block motion above 90 degrees flexion, increase the resisted arc in 10 degrees increments as long as patient is asymptomatic)

- Bench press (block ext and hor abd beyond neutral)
- pec deck (block hor abd at 30 degrees)
- deltoid (optional)
- 2. Add:
- single arm military press
- sitting press up
- 3. Isokinetic at high speeds (>180/sec) *(stop if pain present)
- IR/ER at 45 degrees abd
- flex/ext
- flex/abd-ext/add
- 4. Medicine ball at months 3-6 (optional)
- push pass / catch
- double arm overhead throw
- single arm toss / catch
- single arm throw
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Goals

- 1. Increase strength all motions to WNL
- 2. Isokinetic test.**
- IR/ER at 45 degrees abd
- flex /abd-ext/add
- abd/add

(**10 reps at 180/sec, 20 reps at 300/sec) (**only perform an isokinetic test with an MD order)

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Phase VI: Return to sports

consult with MD for time approximations

Tennis?

- Ground strokes 6-9 months?**
- Serves at 12 months?**

Throwing?

Swimming?

Other?