

**Massive Rotator Cuff Tear or Redo Rotator Cuff Repair Protocol**  
**Richard Johnston, MD**

Sling or brace for six weeks  
Elevated bed 30-40 degrees for sleeping comfort

**Post-op Day (POD) 2**

1.  Maintain arm forward of body
2.  Midline and neutral rotation in brace
3.  Elbow and hand active range of motion

**POD 3**

1.  Passive forward elevation in the plane of scapula instructed to family member to perform at home - No rope and pulley

**Post-Op Week (POW) 3**

1.  Passive forward elevation (PFE) to 130 degrees maximal limit
2.  Passive pendulum exercises

**Post-Op Week (POW) 6**

1.  Critical point needs physical therapist supervision
2.  PFE 130-160 degrees maximally, may use rope and pulley if painless
3.  Passive external rotation (PER) supine with stick to a maximum of 60 degrees
4.  No full internal rotation (reaching behind their back)

**POW 9**

1.  Passive extension with stick
2.  Isometric - flexion, extension, abduction, internal rotation and external rotation
3.  Shoulder shrugs

**POW 12**

1.  Active assistance standing forward elevation with stick in plane of scapula with active lowering independently as tolerated
2.  AAFE - With rope and pulley maximum of 160 degrees
3.  PER - With stick maximum of 60 degrees
4.  Standing extension and internal rotation with stick
5.  Yellow theraband or light weight - flexion, extension, internal rotation and external rotation
6.  Gravity eliminated flexion, external rotation
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**Post-op Month (POM) 6**

1.  Terminal stretching - flexion, internal rotation, external rotation to obtain normal range  
 of motion in flexion, external rotation or internal rotation
2.  Active range of motion progressing to light weights 0-3 pounds in flexion, prone  
 horizontal abduction, prone extension, prone external rotation
3.  Progress to red theraband as tolerated

**POM 6**

1.  Modified weight lifting program where elbow does not pass the plane of the shoulder

**POM 10-12**

1.  Return to modified sport activity, ground strokes in tennis and short irons in golf
2.  Maintenance of daily stretching and strengthening, 4 times per week