



Orthopaedic Associates of Zanesville
Sports Medicine Division Physical Therapy Protocols
Brad E. Brautigan MD

Rehabilitation Guidelines for Arthroscopic Small Rotator Cuff Repair

The intent of this protocol is to provide the clinician with a general guideline of the post-operative course of the patient that has undergone the above stated procedure. It is by no means intended to substitute for one's clinical decision making regarding the progression of a patient's post-operative course based on their physical exam findings, individual progress, and/or the presence of possible post-operative complications. If a clinician requires assistance in the progression, please contact the referring surgeon's office.

0-4 Weeks:

- Sling Immobilization
- Active ROM Elbow, Wrist and Hand
- True Passive (ONLY) ROM Shoulder. NO ACTIVE MOTION.
- Pendulums,
- Supine Elevation in Scapular plane = 140 degrees
- External Rotation to tolerance with arm at side. (emphasize ER, minimum goal 40°)
- Scapular Stabilization exercises (side lying)
- Deltoid isometrics in neutral (submaximal) as ROM improves
- No Pulley/Canes until 5 weeks post-op (these are active motions)

4-8 Weeks:

- Discontinue abduction pillow at 4 weeks post-op
- Discontinue sling use at 5 weeks post-op
- Begin Active Assist ROM and advance to Active as Tolerated
- Elevation in scapular plane and external rotation as tolerated
- No Internal rotation or behind back until 6wks.
- Begin Cuff Isometrics at 5 wks. with arm at the side

8-12 Weeks:

- Active Assist to Active ROM Shoulder as Tolerated
- Elevation in scapular plane and external rotation to tolerance
- Begin internal rotation as tolerated
- Light stretching at end ranges
- Cuff Isometrics with the arm at the side
- Upper Body Ergometer

>12 Weeks:

- Advance to full ROM as tolerated with passive stretching at end ranges
- Advance strengthening as tolerated: isometrics/bands light weights (1-5 lbs.); 8-12 reps/2-3 sets per rotator cuff, deltoid, and scapular stabilizers
- Perform strengthening 3x/week to avoid rotator cuff tendonitis
- Begin eccentrically resisted motions, plyometrics (ex. Weighted ball toss), proprioception (es. body blade)
- Begin sports related rehab at 4 ½ months, including advanced conditioning
- Return to throwing at 6 months
- Throw from pitcher's mound at 9 months
- Collision sports at 9 months