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Rotator cuff repair (Small/Medium) Physical Therapy Protocol

RECOMMENDATIONS

- No driving until 4 weeks post surgery (when sling removed)
- Encourage passive ROM at home daily by family member
- Sling on at all times, including nighttime, for 4 weeks. Only time out is with PT, showering, and range of motion

Weeks 0-4

Primary Goals: Eliminate swelling, regain passive range of motion

- Begin elbow and wrist ROM immediately
- 0-2 weeks: PROM – pendulums, abduction in scapular plane, elevation
- 2-4 weeks: PROM – 90 degrees forward flexion, 45 degrees ER, 20 degrees extension, 45 degrees abduction, 45 degrees ABER
- Codmans, posterior capsule mobilizations
- Closed chain scapula strength
- Teach home exercises

Weeks 4-8

Primary Goals: regain full PROM, begin strengthening

- Advance PROM to full forward elevation, abduction, ABER to 90 degrees, ABIR to 45 degrees
- Begin active/active assisted ROM at 6 weeks
- Resistive strength for scapular stabilizers, biceps, triceps

Weeks 8 - 12

Primary Goals: regain full AROM

- Advance to full active range of motion
- Continue scapular strengthening
- Capsular stretching

Weeks 12-16

Primary Goals: begin resistive rotator cuff strengthening

- Resistive rotator cuff strengthening
- Painless full AROM
- Emphasize external rotation, glenohumeral stabilization
- Begin muscle endurance activities
- Cycling/running as tolerated
- Avoid heavy lifting behind body, above head or reaching out

4-6 months

Primary Goals: Increase shoulder and rotator cuff strengthening

- Advance scapular strengthening
- Advance rotator cuff strengthening, eccentric strengthening
- Begin plyometric and continue endurance activities
- Maintain flexibility
- Return to functional activities
- Return to gym program