

SUPERIOR CAPSULAR RECONSTRUCTION PROTOCOL

Indications:

Massive, irreparable rotator cuff tear without severe bone defect or arthritis
Intact deltoid function, partial to full functioning subscapularis
Intact nerve function (CN XI, axillary nerve)

Postop:

0-6 Weeks

Sling/swathe at all times

1. Pendulum exercises 3x/day minimum
2. Ball squeezes with hand to facilitate circulation while in sling
3. Accessory joint AROM (elbow, forearm, wrist) 3x/day minimum
4. Cryocuff/ ice: Days 1-2 as much as possible, then post activity for pain

* Maximum protection phase, ultimate goal is protecting the integrity of the repair

6-8 Weeks

Sling/swathe at all times, except for exercises, bathing, or sitting quietly

PROM limits: 90° abduction, 20° extension, 70° internal rotation (not behind back)

1. PROM within limits and pain tolerance
2. Postural awareness education
 - a. Scapular retraction & depression to combat tightness of anterior shoulder musculature
3. Gentle soft tissue mobilization and joint mobilization
4. Modalities as indicated for pain or inflammation

8-10 Weeks

Sling for comfort, but may be discontinued, No ROM limits

1. Initiate AAROM (wand and pulleys) unless specified by physician to progress more slowly
 - a. Use of slide board to assist AAROM into flexion, scaption
 - b. Ensure no shoulder hiking
2. Joint mobilization for scapular and glenohumeral mobility
3. Gentle soft tissue mobilization, modalities as indicated

10-12 Weeks

No ROM limits

1. Initiate AROM, unless specified by physician to progress more slowly
 - a. Ensure no shoulder hiking
 - b. Focus on functional planes of motion
 - c. Begin in gravity-assisted/eliminated positions
2. Soft tissue, joint mobilization for scapular and glenohumeral mobility
3. Light shoulder isometrics in all planes, continue postural awareness training

* Patient must be able to elevate without shoulder hiking

12-20+ Weeks

Resisted Strength Training Phase - CLEARED BY SURGEON

1. Ensure sufficient isometric contraction before initiating isotonic
2. Resisted strengthening should focus on low load, high repetitions
3. Do not perform any strengthening above shoulder level
4. Incorporate both open and closed-chain exercises
5. Ensure normal scapulohumeral rhythm is maintained

20-24+ Weeks

Advanced Strength Training Phase - CLEARED BY SURGEON

1. Initiate light/modified overhead strengthening
2. Advanced close-chain strengthening, functional movement patterns
3. Proprioception and light plyometric training
4. Sport-specific/recreational activity training
 - a. No overhead sport, heavy lifting
5. Work-hardening program
 - a. No heavy overhead lifting