



Rotator Cuff Repair Protocol

(with or without Biceps Tenodesis)

Phase 1

- **Sling:** **Wear sling at all times, including while sleeping. Weeks 0-6**
 - Do not use force with the arm as this may damage the repair
- **Weeks 0-2**
 - Perform scapular stability (shrugs, retraction) and grip exercises as shown
 - PASSIVE flexion/extension of elbow twice daily as shown (Do not over-extend)
 - Wrist and hand motion such as typing okay after 5 days. Minimal movement such as light grip/relaxing of the hand is encouraged soon after surgery
- **Weeks 2-6**
 - Continue activities as outlined above. Progress ROM as directed by your provider and physical therapist (begin only as far as tolerated)
 - PASSIVE ROM Goals: Forward elevation 140°+, external rotation 40°+ (Do not exceed 40° if subscapularis tendon or labral repair was also performed), abduction 60°- 90°+
 - **No resistance/ holding objects with the arm/hand greater than 1-2 lb**
 - **No pulleys, pool therapy, or electric stimulation until Phase 2**

Phase 2

- **Weeks 6-12**
 - Begin assisted active ROM, then progress to active ROM all directions
 - Goals: Forward elevation 140°+, external rotation 40°+, abduction 90°+
 - NO forceful external rotation if subscapularis repaired
 - Addition of home exercise program as directed by physical therapist
 - Wall climb, wand exercises (begin supine if needed), towel slide, etc.
 - **No resistance/ holding objects with the arm/hand greater than 3-4 lb**

Phase 3

- **Weeks 12+**
 - Begin strengthening program as directed (usually 50-75% effort, limit 3x/wk max), such as low level therabands, rows, etc. Transition to home exercise program
 - Gradual biceps strengthening if biceps tenodesis also performed
 - Goals: Achieve full ROM without pain, increase activity stepwise as tolerated
 - **We advise against intense sports/activity with likely impact, falls, or risk of forceful twisting of the shoulder until 6 months post-op**
- **Month 5-6**
 - Return to full activity if cleared

Restrictions With Additional Procedures

- **Rotator Cuff Repair Including Subscapularis**
 - **NO forceful external rotation, either passive or active, until week 12+
 - We advise careful stretching during Phase 1 with PT and at home, and limited force with stretching in Phase 2 provided progress is being made
- **Biceps Tenodesis**
 - Do not over-extend the elbow while performing passive ROM early in recovery
 - NO active elbow ROM, or resisted supination until week 6
 - Gradual bicep strengthening after week 12
- **Labral Repair**
 - Limit forward elevation to 140° and external rotation to 40° until week 6

