



Shoulder Labral Repair Rehabilitation Protocol

Phase 1 (0-6 weeks post-op)

Rehabilitation Goals

Protect the surgical repair & avoid a “stiff” shoulder

PRECAUTIONS

NO active use of arm - must **ALWAYS** wear sling/immobilizer, even when sleeping

ROM Guidelines

Progressive ROM exercises as tolerated

Sling

Sling/immobilizer with abduction pillow is worn for 4-6 weeks per surgeon

Wound

- Post-op dressing remains intact until post-op day #3 (~72 hours after surgery)
- May begin showering after post-op day # 3 (no need to cover incision site)
- **Do NOT** submerge shoulder in tub or pool for 4 weeks
- Suture/staple removal @ 7-10 days per Ortho/PT
- Begin scar massage after incision site sloughs/scar is formed

Rehabilitation

- Note: Exercise prescription is dependent upon the tissue healing process and individual functional readiness in all stages. If any concerns or complications arise regarding the progress for any patient, physical therapy will contact the orthopedic surgeon.
- Start with the following exercises: (10-20 repetitions, 3-4 x daily)



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Phase 1 (0-6 weeks post-op)

Weeks 1-2

- **Modified Pendulum:** (May be done in the sling.) While supporting the affected arm with the unaffected hand, move the shoulder forward, backward, side to side and in clockwise and counterclockwise directions. Progress to full pendulum after 3-5 days.
- **Supine Assisted Shoulder Flexion:** Lie on back with arm down at side and thumb pointed towards the ceiling. Use unaffected hand to grasp the wrist of the affected arm and slowly raise it until a point of mild discomfort.
- **Elbow, Wrist, & Hand:** Perform elbow and wrist flexion, extension, pronation, and supination while holding the shoulder in a neutral position at side. For the hand, use a foam ball, newspaper, or theraputty to squeeze repetitively.
- **Gentle (“Two Finger”) Isometrics:** Use the unaffected hand to provide very light, pain free resistance during shoulder flexion, adduction, extension, and abduction (No rotation).

Weeks 3-4

- **Gentle (“Two Finger”) Isometrics:** add gentle, pain free resistance for IR & ER
- **Aerobic Conditioning on Recumbent Bike:** *Sling must be worn*
- **Scapular Retraction & Protraction:** Gently “pinch” shoulder blades together. Hold for 5 seconds and relax. Then spread shoulder blades apart. Hold for 5 seconds and relax.

Weeks 5-6

- **Lower Extremity Weight Lifting:** May begin leg & calf press, hamstring curls, hip add/abd
- **Shoulder AAROM exercises:** Wand, pulley, gentle towel stretch, etc.

Follow-Up

- Physical Therapy: weekly
- Ortho: ~6 wks post-op
- Supervised rehab: 1-2 x per wk

Documentation

- Precautions, pain level, medications and modalities
- Observation: (incision sites) - Signs/symptoms of infection? Site healing well?
- Neurovascular status: Distal pulses, motor and sensation intact? Shoulder passive ROM (forward flexion, ER with shoulder at side)



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Shoulder Labral Repair Rehabilitation Protocol

Phase 2(7-12 weeks post-op).

Rehabilitation Goals

- ROM: Full shoulder flexion and internal rotation
- ~90% full external rotation
- Pain free ADLs

PRECAUTIONS

- NO pushups, heavy lifting, or other sports participation
- NO repetitive overhead use of shoulder

Sling

Wean from wearing sling/immobilizer per ortho/PT guidance

Rehabilitation

- Continue phase I exercises as needed
- Progress to the following exercises and increase intensity gradually when patient is ready (i.e., no increase in shoulder pain or stiffness since the previous exercise session)
- Note: all strengthening should be done, starting with low weights, high repetitions, and in a painless ROM



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Shoulder Labral Repair Rehabilitation Protocol

Phase 2(7-12 weeks post-op).

Weeks 7-8

- Upper body cycle: begin with three 1-min sets (forwards and backwards) progress gradually
- Shoulder AROM and AAROM exercises: Wand, pulley, towel stretch, sleeper's stretch, etc.
- Progressive strengthening: ER & IR with arm at side, FF & scaption to 60-90°, prone rows (first set: 20 repetitions, then 1 additional set at the same weight to muscle failure)

Weeks 9-12

- Beginning level pool program – no overhead strokes
- Aerobic Conditioning: Bike, elliptical, stairmaster as desired.
- Beginning level neuromuscular/functional training exercises (see appendix)
- Beginning level shoulder stabilization exercises (see appendix)
- May begin jogging (start with 5 minutes and progress gradually as tolerated)
- Progressive strengthening: ER/IR with shoulder in 30° elevation, FF/scaption to 60-90°, rows (first set: 15 reps, then 2 additional sets at the same weight to muscle failure)
- Beginning to intermediate level neuromuscular/functional training exercises (see appendix)
- Beginning to intermediate level shoulder stabilization exercises (see appendix)

Follow-Up

- Physical Therapy: bimonthly
- Ortho: ~3 months post-op;
- Supervised rehabilitation: 2-3 x per week as needed

Documentation

- Pain level, medications, modalities
- Shoulder ROM & strength



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Shoulder Labral Repair Rehabilitation Protocol

Phase 3 (4-6 months post-op)

Rehabilitation Goals

- Pushups at own pace without pain
- > 90% internal/external rotation strength return

PRECAUTIONS

- **NO** participation in contact/collision sports or military schools until ~9 months post-op

Rehabilitation

- Continue phase II exercises as needed
- Progress to the following exercises and increase intensity gradually when patient is ready (i.e., no increase in shoulder pain or stiffness since the previous exercise session)
- Note: all strengthening should be done, starting with low weights, high repetitions, and in a painless ROM



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Shoulder Labral Repair Rehabilitation Protocol

Phase 3 (4-6 months post-op)

Weeks 13-16

- Warm-up: 5-10 minutes on upper body cycle
- General upper quarter stretching: 5-10 minutes (shoulder, thoracolumbar spine)
- Progressive strengthening: ER/IR with shoulder in 45-90° elevation, FF/scaption to 90-120°, (first set: 10-15 reps, then 2 additional sets at the same weight to muscle failure)
- May also begin general light intensity strengthening with shoulder in “safe” position (avoid heavy overhead lifting, avoid shoulders in the 90° elevation, 90° ER position)
- Intermediate level neuromuscular/functional training exercises (see appendix)
- Intermediate level shoulder stabilization exercises (see appendix)

Weeks 17-26

- Intermediate/advanced level neuromuscular/functional training exercises (see appendix)
- Intermediate/advanced level shoulder stabilization exercises (see appendix)
- Progressive sports training: Begin at 25-50% intensity, progress gradually (see appendix)

Follow-Up

- PT: Monthly
- Ortho: ~6 months post-op;
- Supervised rehabilitation: 1-2 x per week as needed

Documentation

- Pain level & medications
- Shoulder ROM & strength

Miscellaneous

- After 6 months post-op: Exercises in phase III are continued, gradually increasing intensity & duration as tolerated.
- The recommendation is to wait until 6 months post-op to return to contact/collision sports. This time period may be adjusted slightly by the surgeon and therapist according to patient progress.



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