

Rotator Cuff Repair Protocol

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Massive repairs follow different protocol.

Time Frame	Treatment	Goals
Phase I: 0-2 weeks following surgery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruction in signs and symptoms of infection, and cryotherapy. • Sling for 6 weeks continuously except for rehab and hygiene care. Can begin to wean following the 6 weeks. • No AROM or lifting/supporting body weight with hands. • Exercises: Elbow, wrist, neck AROM, Ball squeezes, Shoulder shrugs/ scapular squeezes, Codman's (PASSIVE). – HEP for 2 weeks beginning at PT visit Postop Day 1. • Shower at 3 days postop if arthroscopic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the repair and promote optimal healing. • Independent in HEP • Independent in cryotherapy • Independent in donning and doffing of sling for hygiene and PT.
Phase II (2-6 weeks after surgery)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gentle PROM in plane of scapula weeks 2-4 • Gentle AAROM (ensuring no active movement) weeks 4-6 • No active movement • Exercises: PROM → AAROM flexion, abduction, and ER toward full 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate gentle PROM • Ensure patient compliance with sling and no AROM • Progress to gentle AAROM
Phase III (6-12 weeks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress AAROM to AROM against gravity weeks 6-8 • Progress PROM to full in all planes • No resistance training for 12 weeks post-surgery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress PROM and AAROM to full ROM • Initiate AROM against gravity • No weight heavier than soup can until 12 weeks
Phase IV (12-24 weeks after surgery)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gradually restore shoulder strength, power and endurance. • Lifting only light resistance with a long lever arm. • No sudden lifting, jerking or pushing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return to full activity