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Health Partners Specialty Center
435 Phalen Blvd., 3rd Floor
Saint Paul, MN 55130
651-254-8300

TRIA Orthopaedic Center
155 Radio Dr.
Woodbury, MN 55125
952-831-8742

Dr. Myeroff's Standard Rotator Cuff Repair Physical Therapy Protocol

Tendons Repaired: Supraspinatus
 Infraspinatus
 Subscapularis

Biceps: Tenodesis
 Tenotomy

Phase 1 (0 to 6 weeks): **Start PT by 2 weeks (coordinated with your first post-surgery office visit)**

Treatment Frequency – 2-3x/wk – to be determined by therapist depending on patient's progress and independence.

Precautions: (PROTECTED PHASE)

- Sling on at all times – okay to remove for bathing and exercises (4 times a day do elbow, wrist and finger motion)
- **No AROM of shoulder (treat the shoulder like a wet noodle)**
- If biceps tenodesis, **NO active elbow flexion or forearm supination until 4 weeks postop**
- If subscapularis repair, **NO external rotation past 30° or resisted internal rotation**

Goals:

- Protect repair and promote healing
- Decrease pain and inflammation – Icing/cold packs 20 minutes every hour while awake and after exercises and therapy sessions
- Gradually progress PROM

Exercises – done in pain-free manner, three times

- AROM elbow, wrist, hand as necessary with arm at side (begin POD #1, do 3 times a day - self-guided)
- Scapula retraction setting/isometrics
- Limited supine PROM with Wand

Dr. Chad Myeroff

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- 130° forward flexion by week 6
- 60° abduction by week 6
- Pulley: flexion, abduction, IR – **begin at 4 weeks post-op**
- Wand – ER 0-30

Skilled PROM and other Manual Therapy for pain relief/ROM progression – **no joint mobilization other than oscillations for pain relief (Grade 1).**

Skilled therapy visits to include training on sling donning and doffing, shoulder precautions / restrictions.

Criteria for Progression to Phase 2

- At least 6 weeks of healing has elapsed since surgery
- Relatively pain-free PROM to 120° forward flexion, 45° abduction, 30° external rotation

Phase 2 (weeks 6 to 12):

Treatment Frequency – 1-2x/wk – to be determined by therapist depending on patient's progress and independence.

- 3 times a day home exercise program

Precautions: (MOTION PHASE)

- No lifting > 1 lb. – coffee cup
- No overhead activity other than prescribed exercises
- No ACTIVE motion or firing of the Cuff
- wean from the sling except during "dangerous" activities

Goals:

- Wean from sling
- Full PROM
- Minimize irritation/inflammation of cuff – Icing/cold packs 10-15 min – after exercises and therapy sessions, 2-4 times a day
- Scapular stability/control allowing pure shoulder dynamic control

Exercises: Done in relative pain-free manner – 1-2x/day

- PROM progressing towards AAROM - exercise possibilities:
 - Continue pulley for end range elevation stretching
 - Pulley or towel IR stretching
 - Wall flexion/abduction slides
 - Wand exercises all planes

Criteria for Progression to Phase 3

- At least 12 weeks of healing has elapsed since surgery
- Relatively pain-free AAROM

Phase 3 (weeks 12 to 18):

Treatment Frequency – 1x/wk – to be determined by therapist and depends on patient's progress.

- 3 times a day home exercise program

Precautions: (STRENGTH PHASE)

- Minimize repetitive overhead activity

Goals:

- Full AROM w/ good scapular control/pure shoulder movement
- Progressive strengthening and endurance
- Progression to functional activities
- 12-14 weeks AAROM, then AROM

Exercises: Done in pain-free manner – 3 times a day home exercises; all within patient tolerance and to protect overloading the cuff too early

- ROM – end range stretching – wall, doorway, passive capsule stretches (posterior)
- Scapular stabilization
- Flexion, scaption, abduction, sidelying ER
- Prone scapular setting – arms at side or elevated below 60° (below impingement levels)
- Prone AROM – flexion, extension, horizontal abduction
- Supine – protraction; AROM flexion (train whistle)
- Cuff Strengthening: starting week 14 - IR and ER only, then add abduction
 - Isometrics
 - Theraband
 - PREs – 0-1#

Phase 4 (beginning week 19):

Treatment Frequency – 1x/wk to every 2 or 3 weeks; transitioning to independent program per PT.

Goals:

- Independent home program
- Progression back to all functional/recreational activities

Exercises: Per phase 3, now able to add 1-5 lb. PREs.