

SMALL (TYPE I) ROTATOR CUFF REPAIR (< 1 CM)
ARTHROSCOPIC

Phase I- Protective Phase (Week 0 – 6)

Goals:

- Maintain integrity of repair
- Gradual return to full PROM/AAROM
- Increase shoulder strength
- Decrease pain

Weeks 0 – 2:

- Sling for protection and comfort (3 weeks)
- Elbow/wrist ROM exercises, hand gripping
- PROM to tolerance in flexion, ER/IR in scapular plane and ER/IR at 90° abduction
- AAROM to tolerance:
 - Pendulum
 - Flexion to 145°
 - ER/IR to tolerance in scapular plane
 - ER/IR to 60° at 90° abduction
- Strengthening:
 - Sub-maximal/pain-free isometrics (all with bent elbow):
 - Flexion
 - Abduction
 - ER/IR
 - Extension
 - Bicep
- Pain-control modalities

Weeks 3 – 4:

- Progress PROM to full as tolerated
- AAROM:
 - Flexion to tolerance
 - ER/IR to tolerance in scapular plane and at 90° abduction
- AROM:
 - Flexion to 90°
- Upper extremity cycle

- Strengthening:
 - Tubing ER @ 0° abduction
 - Isotonics (light):
 - Prone rows to neutral arm position
 - Prone horizontal abduction
 - Bicep curls

Weeks 5 – 6:

- Maintain full PROM/AAROM
- Strengthening:
 - Continue/progress rhythmic stabilization drills
 - Continue tubing ER at 0° abduction working on endurance
 - Tubing scapular strengthening to neutral working on endurance
 - Isotonics (gradually progress resistance):
 - Flexion to 90⁰ (no resistance until AROM is without hiking)
 - ER/IR in side lying
 - Prone rows
 - Prone horizontal abduction
 - Biceps/triceps

Phase II – Intermediate Phase (7 – 12 Weeks)

Goals:

- Full, non-painful ROM
- Improve strength and power
- Increase functional activities; decrease residual pain

Weeks 7 – 10:

- Maintain full PROM, AAROM and AROM
- Strengthening:
 - Continue isotonic/tubing and stabilization strengthening
 - Closed chain stabilization drills

Weeks 10 – 12:

- Continue ROM and self-capsular stretching if necessary
- Strengthening:
 - High-speed isokinetics for ER/IR in neutral
 - Begin general shoulder strengthening with precautions:
 - Latissimus pulls with narrow grip and arms in front of body
 - Chest press with light dumbbells keeping elbows anterior to shoulder

Machine rows

Military press with light dumbbells and arms in front only

- Plyometric program (2 handed → 1handed)

Phase III – Advanced Strengthening Phase (Weeks 13 – 16)

Goals:

- Maintain full, non-painful ROM
- Improve shoulder complex strength
- Improve neuromuscular control
- Gradual return to functional activities

Weeks 13 – 16:

- Continue flexibility, strength, stabilization and plyometric exercises
- Isokinetic strength test for ER/IR in neutral at 180°/ sec and 300°/sec
- Initiate interval sport program

Phase IV – Return to Activity Phase (Weeks 17 – 24)

Goals:

- Maintain shoulder ROM, strength and neuromuscular control
- Gradual return to recreational sport activities
- Gradual return to strenuous occupational activities

Weeks 17 – 24:

- Continue flexibility, strength, stabilization and plyometric exercises
- Continue with interval sport program and progress to return to play when released

Criteria for return to play:

- Physician approval
- Full, non-painful ROM
- Satisfactory strength test
- Satisfactory clinical exam
- Satisfactory completion of interval sport program