Connecticut Orthopaedics

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Rotator Cuff Repair (Standard) With or Without Biceps Tenodesis

Post-Operative Protocol

Phase I – Maximum Protection

Weeks 0 to 6:

- Sling for 6 weeks, ultra-sling with abduction pillow
- Avoid active motion of shoulder
- Avoid loaded elbow flexion
- **Passive range of motion only**
  - No motion x2 weeks
  - Progressive PROM in all directions as tolerated
    - Avoid ER past 20 degrees if subscapularis repair

  Goals
  - Reduce inflammation
  - Decrease pain
  - Postural education

  Treatment suggestions
  - Cervical range of motion and basic deep neck flexor activation (chin tucks).
  - Instruction on proper head, neck, and shoulder alignment
  - Active hand and wrist range of motion.
  - Active shoulder retraction
  - Passive scapular mobility
  - Upper thoracic mobilization
  - Pendulums
  - Ice and modalities to reduce pain and inflammation

Phase II – Restoring mobility, function, and active range of motion

Weeks 6 to 12:

- Discontinue sling
- Resume light ADLs (<2 lb), ensuring no heavy lifting, pushing, pulling or repetitive reaching

  Goals
  - Continued protection of repaired tissue, while slowly progressing to full active range of motion
  - Full PROM in all planes
  - No compensatory arm elevation strategies (e.g. no shoulder shrug with reaching)

  Treatment suggestions
  - Progress from AAROM to AROM when adequate strength and motor control
  - Start strengthening when full AROM is achieved (progress slowly)
  - Avoid loaded RC strengthening in overhead positions until 12 weeks
  - Dynamic stabilization exercises with light perturbation isometrics
  - Progress to higher intensity cardio training (avoid running)
  - Prone YTI drills
  - Begin light bicep loading between 8-12 weeks, progress slowly

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Phase III – Advanced strengthening and proprioception

Weeks 12 to 20:

Goals

- Progressive strengthening and endurance training
- Introduction of sport-specific drills (avoid participation in sport until cleared by surgeon)

Treatment suggestions

- Begin strengthening at or above 90 degrees with prone and/or standing YTI
- Initiate light bench press and shoulder press (pain-free)
- Closed chain perturbation training, plank progressions, etc.
- Push-up progression (counter height→knee height→floor)