

Central Vermont Medical Center

ORTHOPEDICS & SPORTS MEDICINE

Rotator Cuff Rehabilitation Protocol
Small, Medium and Large rotator cuff tears

(Use the Large / Conservative protocol for all of Dr. Meriam's patients unless otherwise indicated)

Exercises	Small	Medium	large
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PROM progressing per patient's tolerance in Flexion and ER • Pendulum exercises • Elbow, wrist, and hand ROM • Postural instructions to promote active scapular retraction • Scapular clock exercises • Shoulder mobilization – posteriorly • Ice and pain modalities as indicated • Sling on at all times except for exercises and personal hygiene 	0-4 weeks	0-4 weeks	0-4 weeks

Goals for progression to the next phase:

1. decrease pain
2. improve tolerance of progressive ROM

Exercises	Small	Medium	large
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue PROM • Begin PROM in abduction per patient to tolerance • Shoulder MOBs – posterior and caudal • Pectoralis minor flexibility • Begin shoulder IR flexibility • Begin isotonic scapular retraction / protraction • Begin manual resistance scapular stabilization • Begin wand exercises in seated position <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. shoulder external rotation 2. shoulder flexion with physician's authorization • Begin sub-max isometrics <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. shoulder flexion 2. shoulder abduction 3. shoulder extension 4. shoulder internal and external rotation • ice and pain modalities as indicated • begin weaning from the sling 	4-6 weeks	4-6 weeks	4-6 weeks

Goals for Progression to the next phase:

1. full PROM supine
2. sleeping through the night
3. normal posture

exercises	Small	Medium	Large
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D/ C sling per physician • AAROM per patient tolerance • UBE – light resistance (90-100 RPM) • Proprioception exercise • Ball on wall, UE swiss ball mobility – IR / ER 	4 weeks	6 weeks	6-8 weeks

Goals for progression to next phase:

1. Full AAROM – avoiding scapular substitution
2. Independent dressing / ADL's

exercises	Small	Medium	large
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin progression of AROM per patient tolerance • Avoid scapular substitution • UBE moderate resistance (75-85 RPM) • Begin closed chain UE activities <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. seated press-up 2. towel wipes – horizontal, diagonal and vertical 	4-8 weeks	6-8 weeks	8-10 weeks

Goals for progression to next phase:

1. avoidance of scapular substitution with shoulder ROM

Exercises	Small	Medium	large
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • light T-band exercises • shoulder IR / ER • horizontal abduction / adduction • begin prone exercise program – No weight • Row • Shoulder extension • Horizontal abduction – T exercise position • Lower Trap – Y exercise position • Begin rhythmic stabilization exercises – supine 	Weeks 8 -12	Weeks 8 -12	Weeks 10-12

Goals for progression to the next phase:

1. Full Active ROM
2. no trapezius substitution
3. no reactive inflammation with strengthening
4. return to full ADL's

Exercises	Small	Medium	large
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • progress to T-band exercises <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. begin diagonal patterns • begin prone exercise program with weight <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. row 2. shoulder extension 3. horizontal abduction – T exercise position 4. lower trap – Y exercise position • Progress dumbbell program with weight <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. scaption 2. diagonal patterns 3. bent row 4. prone retraction with ER • Functional eccentric strengthening • Progress closed chain UE strengthening <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. push up with a plus 2. swiss ball activities • Trunk and lower extremity strengthening 	Weeks 12-16	Weeks 12-16	Weeks 12-16

Goals for progression to next phase:

1. Full AROM with no scapular substitution between weeks 10-12
2. 5/5 rotator cuff strength
3. 65-70% IR / ER isokinetic testing

Exercise	Small	Medium	large
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiation of throwing progression • Continuation of functional UE / LE strengthening and endurance activity • Stretching program with emphasis on posterior capsule 	4-6 months	4-6 months	4-6 months

Return to Sport:

1. completion of throwing progression
 - no reactive effusion, pain and / or instability
2. 65-70% IR / ER isokinetic testing