

# Rehabilitation Guidelines for Arthroscopic Posterior Instability Repair

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- General Information
  - Total Recovery time is between 4-6 months depending on factors such as injury severity, patient sport/activity/age and type of repair.
  - Adherence to rehab protocol guidelines and restrictions is critical in avoiding re-injury or failures.
  - Levels and types of allowed activity defined below.
- Immobilization
  - External Rotation Immobilizer Sling should be worn for 8 weeks in uncontrolled environments (around dogs, kids, in crowds, etc.).
  - Sling should be worn while sleeping for 6 weeks.
  - Sling may be removed in controlled environments for light activity after 6 weeks.
  - Discontinue sling completely at 8 weeks.
- Personal Hygiene / Showering
  - Avoid getting incision/portal sites wet for 48 hours.
  - Ok to begin showering 48 hours after surgery (if no wound related issues).
  - Avoid baths, saunas, pools, lakes, etc for two weeks.
  - DO NOT remove steristrips, allow them to fall off on their own.

## *Phase I (0-2 weeks):*

### Precautions

- NO Internal rotation for 6 weeks
- NO forward flexion with the arm internally rotated or adducted across the midline
- Do not use arm for any activities and remain in External Rotation Immobilizer Sling in external rotation for 6 weeks
- **Sleep with sling on for 4 wks**

### Aerobic

- Easy walking on level surface x 30 mins

### Range of motion

- Active wrist and elbow range of motion only

### *Strength*

- Wrist and grip only

### *Modalities*

- Ice for 20 minutes, 3 times per day

### *Phase I Goals*

- Pain control, protection of repair, elbow/wrist/hand motion

### *Phase II (2-6 weeks):*

#### *Aerobic*

- Easy walking on level surface x 30 mins

#### *Range of motion*

- Begin pendulum exercise several times a day:
- Pendulum exercise
  - Bend over at the waist and let the arm hang down.
  - Using your body to initiate movement, swing the arm gently forward and backward and in a circular motion.
  - Repeat for 2 to 3 minutes at a time, 6 times per day
- **NO Internal rotation for 6 weeks.**
- Supine (lying on back): perform external rotation, flexion, extension and abduction
- Supine forward arm elevation weeks 2 to 4: limit 45° No internal rotation
- No horizontal adduction

### *Strength*

- start rotator cuff gentle isometrics with arm in external rotation
- strengthening in plane of scapula – this includes internal – external strengthening with arm at low abduction angles (less than 30 degrees), only under full supervision
- Avoid posterior capsular stress

### *Modalities*

- Ice for 20 minutes, 3 times per day

### *Phase II Goals*

- Pain control, protection of repair, initiate protected motion

### *Phase III (6-12 weeks):*

#### *Goals*

- Gradual increase in ROM
- Improve strength
- Decrease pain/inflammation
- Protect the labrum repair

#### *Activities:*

- Sling
  - The sling is no longer necessary except as outlined in introduction.
- Use of the operated arm
  - You may now carefully use your arm. Avoid having the arm forcefully pulled behind you or across your chest in front of you. Continue to avoid heavy weight lifting or manual labor. Follow any further instructions given to you by your doctor.

- Precautions
  - You may use your hand on the operated arm as long as you do not raise the hand above your head or reach across the front of your body. Also, do not reach your hand behind you as if to tuck in your shirt or to loop your belt. You should bend your arm at the elbow and use your fingers and hand, such as to reach up and touch your face. Keep your elbow in front of you.
  - Do not bear the weight of the body on your arm.
  - **Do not lift anything heavier than a glass of milk.**

#### *Aerobic*

- Easy walking on level surface x 60 mins
- Stationary bike x 30 min

#### *Range of Motion*

- Days per week: 7
- Times per day: 1-3
- Program:
  - Pendulum exercises
  - Supine External Rotation
  - Hands-behind-head stretch
  - Standing external rotation stretch
  - Standing forward flexion to 90° (scaption)
  - Supine forward flexion: Limit 140° week 6

#### *Strength*

- Days per week: 7
- Times per day: 1
- Theraband internal and external rotation: (internal rotation to neutral only)
- Prone row
- Prone extension
- Biceps curl
- Side-lying external rotation
- Deltoid isometric exercises at less than 30 degrees abduction
- Limit IR to neutral, abduction to 160 degrees, flexion to 160 degrees
- Shrugs
- Horizontal abduction exercises
- Therabands with elbow comfortable at patients side

#### *Phase IV (12-16 weeks):*

##### *Goals:*

- Protect the shoulder repair
- Regain full range of motion
- Continue gradual strengthening

##### *Activities:*

- Use of the operated arm
  - You may now use your arm in a more normal fashion. You may move the arm into all positions including behind the back if it is comfortable.

- Avoid having the arm forcefully pulled behind you, pulled across the chest or bearing weight as if doing a push-up.
- Continue to avoid heavy weight lifting or manual labor. Follow any further instructions given to you by your doctor.

*Precautions:*

- Do not lift heavy objects overhead with the weight going behind the head. In other words, keep objects in front of you where you can see them.

*Aerobic*

- Easy walking on level surface x 60 mins
- Stationary bike x 30 min
- Light jogging x 30 min when cleared by surgeon

*Range of Motion*

- Days per week: 7
- Times per day: 1-2
- Pendulum exercises
- External rotation at 90° abduction stretch
- Wall slide Stretch
- Hands-behind-head stretch
- Standing external rotation stretch
- Standing Forward Flexion
- Behind the back internal rotation: starts after the 8th week after surgery
- Horizontal adduction stretch: starts after the 8th week after surgery
- May begin pool therapy with range of motion but no swimming

*Strength*

- Days per week: 7
- Times per day: 1
- External Rotation Prone extension
- Internal Rotation
- Standing forward flexion “full-can” exercise
- Shoulder Shrug
- Dynamic hug
- Seated Row
- Prone row

*Phase V (16-24 weeks):*

*Goals*

- Start sports specific exercises (gentle at first) at 4-5 months post-op
- Return to full unrestricted activity at 6 months
- Please arrange for home/gym physical therapy program

*Aerobic*

- Progress to running & ruck marching

*Range of Motion*

- Return to full motion and perform gentle stretching to correct any residual deficits

### *Strengthening*

- Continue strengthening exercises from Phase 4
- Initiate wall pushups and progress to horizontal
- Avoid bench press

### *Phase VI (>24 wks):*

#### *Goals*

- Ability to perform push-ups, pull-ups, swim
- Return to contact/overhead sports/airborne operations/deployment when cleared by surgeon

#### *Aerobic*

- May start swimming

#### *Strength*

- Start throwing progression (short to long)
- Begin with lat pull downs and progress to pull-ups
- Initiate free weights & machine lifting