

## Greater Hartford Orthopedic Group, P.C.

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### Postoperative Rehabilitation Protocol: Rotator Cuff Repair- Large/Massive Rotator Cuff Tear

#### **Phase I: Weeks 0-4**

**GOALS:** Minimize pain and swelling, PROTECT healing structures of rotator cuff, Facilitate full passive range of motion, encourage HEP

**Immobilization:** Sling to be worn at all times except for hygiene and home exercise

**Precautions:** No AROM  
No excessive stretching, sudden movements or excessive motion behind back  
No supporting of body weight

**Modalities:** Cryotherapy

**ROM:** Home Passive Flexion and ER to tolerance  
Use 30 min/session 3x/day for 2-3 weeks  
Elbow, wrist and hand ROM to be full  
ROM limitations will be directed by MD  
No aggressive stretching until okayed by MD

**Exercises:** Pendulums, elbow, wrist and hand motions including grip strengthening, Table slides, and overhead pulleys for patient PROM  
Joint mobilization as indicated (Grades I-II)  
Begin scapular control exercises (start in sidelying)  
PROM with L-bar/cane for IR/ER at 30-45 ABD at week 3-4

#### **Phase II: Weeks 4-8**

**GOALS:** Minimize postoperative pain and swelling, facilitate full PROM, PROTECT healing structures of rotator cuff, facilitate strength of rotator cuff/scapular stabilizers musculature

**Immobilization:** wean out of sling at 4-6 weeks

**Modalities:** Cryotherapy

**ROM:** PROM expected to be full in all motions by week 8, may aggressively pursue any deficiencies  
Begin active/assistive ROM exercises by week 8  
Begin AFE supine, progress to AFE sitting

**Exercises:** Overhead pulleys, canes and pendulum as indicated  
PROM as above  
Joint mobilizations as indicated (Grades I-III)  
Begin submax isometrics with arm at neutral for RTC and deltoid at week 6-8

Progress scapular stabilization program (sidelying to prone)  
Begin Rhythmic Stabilization (from neutral then progressing ranges as tolerated)

### **Phase III: 2 Months - 4 Months**

**GOALS:** Minimize postoperative pain, facilitate full PROM and AROM, Protect healing structures of rotator cuff, Maximize strength of rotator cuff/scapular stabilizers, Pursue independent function with upper extremity

**Modalities:** Cryotherapy

**ROM:** PROM expected to be full-aggressively pursue any deficits  
Begin AROM for RTC with arm at side at week 8  
Gradually work on AROM out of neutral, avoid scapular substitution patterns

**Exercises:** Overhead pulleys, canes, other Active Assistive exercises as indicated  
PROM as needed  
Joint mobilizations as indicated (Grades III-IV)  
Progress scapular active exercises in prone position  
Progress pain free multiangle isometrics of RTC/deltoid  
Progressing to isotonic strengthening of RTC/deltoid  
Progress active resistive exercises throughout-TOTAL ARM STRENGTHENING at 12 weeks  
Be sure to watch control and scapular substitution  
Avoid overhead resistance exercises

### **Phase IV: 4+ Months**

**GOALS:** Protect rotator cuff, Maximize strength of rotator cuff and scapular stabilizers muscles, Return to pain free functional sport and/or work activities

**Exercises:** TAS progression, advancing resistance as tolerated  
Throwing program, overhead activities at 4 months