

**GARRETT COUNTY ORTHOPAEDICS**

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**Rotator Cuff Repair (1-3 Tendons)**

**Overall Precautions:**

- 1. Large or massive tear progress slowly; pain free ranges of motion only**
- 2. If open repair for revision, longer protection phase for deltoid healing (7-8 weeks in sling or until cleared by surgeon)**
- 3. See appendix for general shoulder progressions**
- 4. No active elbow flexion or supination until 6 wks post op if biceps tenodesis performed**

**Week 1-2**

Immobilizer with abductor pillow x 6 weeks – Even while sleeping

Place pillow under shoulder / arm while sleeping for comfort

Hand squeezing exercises

Elbow and wrist active motion (AROM) with shoulder in neutral position at side

Supported/sling pendulum exercises

Shoulder shrugs / scapular retraction without resistance

**PROM**

– Flexion to 90 degrees

– Abduction to 90 degrees

– ER to neutral (0 degrees)

Active assist motion (AAROM) flexion, abd, ER to neutral only supine w/ wand or opposite hand

Gentle "2 finger" isometrics flexion, adduction, extension, abduction (**NO rotation**)

Stationary bike (must wear immobilizer)

Ice pack

**Goals**

Pain control

Abd/flexion to 90 degrees, ER to neutral

**Weeks 3 – 4**

Continue immobilizer x 6 weeks

Continue appropriate previous exercises

Full pendulum exercises

AAROM/PROM by therapist:

-Flexion to 120 degrees

-Abduction to 120 degrees

- ER to 20 degrees

Gentle "2 finger" isometrics adding IR and ER (pain free resistance)

**Goals**

Pain control

Abd/flexion to 120, ER to 20 degrees

**Weeks 5 - 6**

Immobilizer sling D/C at 6 weeks.

Continue all previous exercises and therapist assisted PROM  
Shoulder AAROM –  
Flexion and Abduction 150 degrees (pulleys, supine wand, etc)  
– ER as tolerated (wand, doorway stretch, towel, etc)  
– IR as tolerated **if no subscapularis repair** (wand, towel, etc)  
Continue x6 direction isometrics

**Goal** – AAROM Flexion and Abduction to 150 degrees  
ER within 10 deg or uninvolved

**Weeks 6 – 9**

D/C Immobilizer  
Continue appropriate previous exercises  
All AROM, AAROM through full range of motion  
UBE light fwd/bwd (3 x 1 min sets, progress gradually)  
Progressive shoulder strengthening light resistance with high repetition in pain free ROM  
- IR and ER with arm at side  
- Flexion/scaption to 90 deg

Prone rows with light Theraband  
Prone scapular stabilization exercises (without weights)  
Supine "ceiling punches"  
Biceps and Triceps PREs with light weight  
Treadmill – Walking progression program  
Aerobic conditioning Bike  
Pool walking / running – No overhead strokes in pool

**Goal** –  
Full AROM

**Weeks 9-12**

Continue appropriate previous exercises  
PROM / mobilization as needed to regain full ROM  
Progressive shoulder strengthening; increased resistance as tolerated  
Rows progressing resistance  
Body Blade  
Ball on wall (arcs, abc's)  
BAPS on hands  
Ball toss with arm at side using light ball  
Push-up progression against wall  
Elliptical trainer  
Pool therapy – With UE resistance

**Goals-**  
Normal rotator cuff strength  
30 wall push-ups

**Months 3- 4**

Continue appropriate previous exercises  
Push-up progression – Table to chair  
Ball toss overhead  
Quadruped stabilization (foam, thera ball walk outs)  
Treadmill – Running progression program

**Goals**  
30 chair push ups  
Run 2 miles at easy pace

**Months 4 – 6**

Continue appropriate previous exercises

Weight training with light resistance (no overhead press or pull downs)  
Push-ups full BW  
Sit-ups with hands behind head  
Swimming  
Running progression to Track  
Transition to home/gym program

**Goals**

Return to all activities  
No contact sports until >9mo post op

Todd W. Feathers, MD  
Orthopaedic Surgeon



## ROTATOR CUFF REPAIR REHABILITATION GUIDELINES

### APPENDIX

#### APPENDIX: GENERAL SHOULDER PROGRESSIONS

\*The following is a supplement to the rehabilitation guidelines on various types of shoulder exercises. It is not an all-inclusive list, but provides ideas for gradually progressing a patient through rehabilitation\*  
 In general, beginning level shoulder exercises are performed with light resistance in a ROM below 90° of shoulder elevation. Intermediate level exercises are done with moderate resistance in a ROM below 120°. Advanced level exercises are done with moderate resistance in a full ROM, but avoiding the 90° abducted, 90° externally rotated position until ~5-6 months post-op. All training should be pain free.

Exercise Type	Beginning Level ~7-10 weeks post-op	Intermediate Level ~9-18 weeks post-op	Advanced Level ~16-26 weeks post-op
<b>Body Blade</b>	Flexion/Extension IR/ER Superior/Inferior (arm at side)	FF range to 90° Scaption to 90° IR/ER through ROM Horiz adb/add at 90°	FF range to 150° Scaption to 150° IR/ER through ROM Diagonal motions
<b>Ball toss</b>	Chest pass – 2 handed IR toss – (arm at side)	Overhead toss – (2 handed) Behind back toss	Overhead diagonal toss – (2 handed) Regular throwing toss
<b>Prone stabilization</b>	Weight shifting in sitting, standing, prone on all fours	All fours stabilization on stable surface	All fours stabilization on foam or theraball
<b>Supine stabilization</b>	Supine Shoulder Stabilization @ 90°	Supine Shoulder Stabilization from 60-120°	Supine Shoulder Stabilization (Available ROM)
<b>Cuff strengthening</b>	ER/IR – (arm at side)  FF/Scaption to 60-90° (Thumb up)	ER/IR - (30-45° shld scaption)  FF/Scaption to 90-120° (Thumb up)	ER/IR- (45-90°shld scaption) – gradually moving into abd PNF patterns
<b>Scapular strengthening</b>	Ceiling “punches” Rows	“Pushouts” (in standing) Rows (inferior/superior)	Pushup plus
<b>Pushups</b>	none	Wall pushups – progressing to inclined pushups	Knee pushups – progressing to modified regular pushups
<b>Misc activities</b>	Basketball: dribbling, chest and bounce pass Golf: putting Volleyball: bumping Pool: jogging, treading Wall ball drawing	Basketball: shooting within the key only Golf: chipping, short irons Volleyball: setting Pool: No overhead strokes Tossing Frisbee Catching drills: below 90°	Basketball: noncontact drills only Golf: gradual return Vball: gradual return ~6 mo Pool: gradual return Forehand, backhand racquet sports (no overhead)