

AC Joint Reconstruction

The following is a guideline for the post-operative rehab of individuals who have underwent AC joint reconstruction. This schedule will vary from patient to patient based on individual tolerance. The following are **MAJOR OBJECTIVES** for this rehab:

1. 90° of PASSIVE elevation, 30° of PASSIVE external rotation with the humerus in neutral & abduction of 90 by 6 weeks post-op.
2. Full ROM in all directions by 12 weeks.
 - a. ** Pre-operative shoulder ROM will greatly affect ROM realized with therapy
3. NO internal rotation stretch with a towel for 4 weeks post-op
4. AROM at counter top level allowed at 8 weeks post-op. ABSOLUTELY NO lifting of the hand to the head until 6 weeks post-op.
5. Isometric strengthening to begin at 6 weeks post-op

These instructions are intended to be administered by a physical Therapist. If questions arise, please don't hesitate to contact your surgeon or assistant.

IMMEDIATELY POST-OP

- Sling to be worn at all times, no showers, until seen for first post-op visit.
- Begin pendulum exercises in the sling the first week after surgery.
- A/PROM elbow, wrist and hand
- Passive scapular mobilization

WEEK 2 -4

- Prescription for Physical Therapy will be given at the time of first post-op visit.
- In therapy begin:
 1. Wear sling when not performing exercises
 2. Pendulum exercises +/- the sling as tolerated.
 3. Begin pulley exercises, passive prone forward flexion, max to 90 degrees.
 4. PROM as described above, emphasis is on protecting repaired ligaments.
 5. External rotation to 30 degrees with arm in neutral.
 6. Joint mobilizations of the glenohumeral joint - Grade I & II
 7. Scapulothoracic joint mobilization.
 8. Active ROM of the wrist and elbow.
 9. Modalities as needed and as indicated.

WEEK 4 - 6

- Continue with ROM goals as outlined above.
- Begin scapular stabilization exercises while maintaining humerus in **NEUTRAL** at 6 weeks
 1. Shoulder shrugs.
 2. Gentle isometric deltoid/trapezius exercises

WEEK 7 - 12

- Begin more aggressive ROM exercises to increase ROM to FULL by 12 weeks, as tolerated.
- Begin AROM in all directions. Emphasize proper scapulothoracic motion.
- Begin PRE's as indicated by motion and strength for Rotator cuff, periscapular musculature, deltoid & trapezius.
 1. With early PRE's (week 7 & 8) exercises should be pain free. Please emphasize post shoulder girdle strength with prone horizontal abduction with the arm externally rotated, prone shoulder extension with the arm externally rotated as well as other PAIN FREE strengthening exercises.
 2. Add home exercises with theraband for PRE's.
 3. Continue with endurance and strengthening of the shoulder girdle and scapular muscles and progress as tolerated
 4. Incorporate dynamic stability exercises as indicated. Examples as Body Blade and BOING.
 5. By 10 weeks post-op, incorporate prone external rotation with the arm abducted to 90° and the elbow flexed to 90°. Please begin with the humerus stabilized on the plinth and progressed to the point where the patient actively maintains the arm in abduction and rotates the arm upwards.
 6. 2 to 3 speed isokinetic test for IR/ER and Flexion/Extension at 3 Months post-surgery.