



## ARTHROSCOPIC THERMAL CAPSULAR SHRINKAGE WITH SUBACROMIAL DECOMPRESSION

### I. Phase I – Immediate Postoperative Phase “Restrictive Motion” (Day 1 to Week 6)

Goals: Protect the anatomic repair  
Prevent negative effects of immobilization  
Prevent bursal adhesions and articular contractors  
Promote dynamic stability  
Diminish pain and inflammation

#### Week 0-2:

- Sling for 3-4 weeks
- Sleep in immobilizer for 4 weeks
- Elbow/hand ROM
- Hand gripping exercises
- Passive and gentle active assistive ROM exercise
  - Flexion to 60 degrees (Week 2: Flexion to 90 degrees)
  - Elevation in scapular plane to 60 degrees (first week)
  - ER/IR with arm in scapular plane at 45 degrees abduction
  - ER to 10-15 degrees
  - IR to 45 degrees
- \*\*NO active ER or Extension or Abduction
- Submaximal isometrics for shoulder musculature (except shoulder flexion)
- NO isolated Biceps Contractions
- Cryotherapy, modalities as indicated

#### Week 3-4:

- Discontinue use of sling at 3-4 weeks
- Sleep in immobilizer until Week 4
- Continue gentle ROM exercises (PROM and AAROM)
  - Flexion to 125-135 degrees
  - Abduction to tolerance
  - ER in scapular plane at 45° abd to 25-30 degrees
  - IR in scapular plane at 45° abd to 55-60 degrees
  - At week 4 begin ER/IR at 90° of abduction to tolerance
- \*\*NOTE: Rate of progression based on evaluation of the patient.
- No active ER, extension or excessive elevation
- Initiate rhythmic stabilization drills
- Initiate proprioception training
- Tubing ER/IR at 0 degrees Abduction
- Continue isometrics
- Initiate scapular strengthening exercises
- Continue use of cryotherapy
- No isolated biceps

#### Week 5-6:

- Gradually improve ROM
  - Flexion to tolerance (at least 160 degrees)
  - ER at 90 degrees abduction: 45-50 degrees
  - ER at 90 degrees abduction: 60-75 degrees at end of week 6
- May initiate stretching exercises

- Continue tubing ER/IR (arm at side)
- Initiate Active Shoulder Abduction (without resistance)
- Initiate “Full Can” Exercise (Weight of Arm)
- Initiate Prone Rowing, Prone Horizontal Abduction
- NO Biceps Strengthening

## II. **Phase II – Intermediate Phase: Moderate Protection Phase (Week 7-14)**

Goals: Gradually restore full ROM (week 8-10)  
Preserve the integrity of the surgical repair  
Restore muscular strength and balance

### **Week 7-9:**

- Gradually progress ROM:
  - Flexion to 180 degrees
  - ER at 90 degrees abduction: 90-95 degrees
  - IR at 90 degrees abduction: 70-75 degrees
  - Initiate inferior glides joint mobilization technique to prevent subacromial scarring
- Continue to progress isotonic strengthening program
- Initiate PNF strengthening
- Initiate Throwers Ten Program
- Emphasize posterior cuff strengthening and scapular strengthening

### **Week 10-12:**

- May initiate slightly more aggressive strengthening
- Progress ER to Throwers Motion
  - ER at 90 degrees abduction: 110-115 degrees in throwers (Week 10-12)
- Progress isotonic strengthening exercises
- Continue all stretching exercises
- \*\*Progress ROM to functional demands (i.e. overhead athlete)
- Continue all strengthening exercises

## III. **Phase III – Minimal Protection Phase (Week 14-20)**

Goals: Establish and maintain full ROM  
Improve muscular strength, power and endurance  
Gradually initiate functional activities

Criteria to enter Phase III:

- 1) Full non-painful ROM
- 2) Satisfactory stability
- 3) Muscular strength (good grade or better)
- 4) No pain or tenderness

### **Week 14-16:**

- Continue all stretching exercises (capsular stretches)
- Maintain Throwers Motion (Especially ER)
- Continue strengthening exercises:
  - Throwers Ten Program or Fundamental Exercises
  - PNF Manual Resistance

- Endurance training
- Initiate light plyometric program
- Restricted sport activities (light swimming, half golf swings)

**Week 16-20:**

- Continue all exercise listed above
- Continue all stretching
- Continue Throwers Ten Program
- Continue Plyometric Program
- Initiate interval sport program (throwing, etc)  
\*\*See interval Throwing Program

IV. **Phase IV – Advanced Strengthening Phase (Week 20-26)**

Goals: Enhanced muscular strength, power and endurance  
Progress functional activities  
Maintain shoulder mobility

Criteria to enter Phase IV:

- 1) Full non-painful ROM
- 2) Satisfactory static stability
- 3) Muscular strength 75-80% of contralateral side
- 4) No pain or tenderness

**Week 20-26:**

- Continue flexibility exercises
- Continue isotonic strengthening program
- PNF manual resistance patterns
- Plyometric strengthening
- Progress interval sport programs

V. **Phase V – Return to Activity Phase (Month 6 to 9)**

Goals: Gradual return to sport activities  
Maintain strength, mobility and stability

Criteria to enter Phase V:

- 1) Full functional ROM
- 2) Muscular performance isokinetic (fulfills criteria)
- 3) Satisfactory shoulder stability
- 4) No pain or tenderness

**Exercises:**

- Gradually progress sport activities to unrestrictive participation
- Continue stretching and strengthening program