

# Rotator Cuff Repair

## Supraspinatus and Infraspinatus Repair | Physical Therapy Protocol



St. Joseph's Physicians  
A Member of Trinity Health

### STAGE 1 Protection

#### Post-Operative 0-3 Weeks

##### GOALS

- Protected repaired tendon.
- Gradual return to full passive ROM.
- Decrease pain.

##### PRECAUTIONS

- NO RESISTIVE ABDUCTION AND EXTERNAL ROTATION.
- NO ISOMETRICS.

##### TREATMENT

- Sling at all times, during the day and at night.
- Pendulum exercise.
- Pain control modalities.
- Passive ROM: pain-free, gentle and gradual increase to patient tolerance.

#### Post-Operative 3-6 Weeks

##### TREATMENT

- Continue with sling.
- Active assisted ROM
  - Internal (towel)
  - External rotation (T-bar)
  - Wall pulleys for flexion and abduction
- Continue with passive ROM as above.
- If passive ROM is not improving progress to structured aquatic exercise per physician's discretion.
- NO SWIMMING.
- Elbow and hand gripping exercises.
- Begin scapular stabilization exercises with no resistance.
- Home exercise program as above.

### STAGE 2 Intermediate

#### Post-Operative 6-12 Weeks

##### GOALS

- Full Range of motion.
- Prepare for strengthening phase.
- Home exercise program.

##### PRECAUTIONS

- NO FLEXION UNTIL 12 WEEKS.

##### TREATMENT

- Continue with exercises above.
- Add active assistive ROM exercises
  - T-bar for flexion
  - Abduction and extension
  - External rotation
  - Internal rotation
  - Progressing to towel stretch Wall pulleys
- Shoulder isometrics sub-maximal to maximal efforts in all planes without pain, slower progression for abduction and external rotation motions.
- Add resistance to scapular stabilization exercise sub-maximal to maximal effort, push up, push up plus, seated depressions.
- If appropriate at 8 weeks gradual progression to add active ROM (standing to 90) with progression to full rotator cuff program NO weight until 12 weeks.
- Progress to UBE for active warm-up between 8 – 10 weeks.
- Home exercise program as above.

### STAGE 3 Strengthening

#### Post-Operative 12-18 Weeks

##### GOALS

- Full strength for release by physician at week 18.
- Home exercise program.

##### TREATMENT

- Continue with the exercises above.
- Add resistance to rotator cuff program.
- Neuromuscular re-education and sports specific activities.