

Acromioclavicular Joint Reconstruction

Rehabilitation Protocol (Athletes)

I. PHASE I – MOTION PHASE (Weeks 0-2)

- Goals: Initiate ROM exercises & Gentle PROM
- Retard muscular atrophy
- Decrease pain/inflammation

Range of Motion Exercises:

L-bar AAROM & PT directed PROM

- Flexion to tolerance
- ER (begin at 45 degrees abduction, progress to 90 degrees abduction) motion to tolerance
- Rope and pulley scaption
 - (Therapist supervision multiple visits prior to home pulley checkout)
- Pendulum exercises
- Self-capsular stretches
- Seated Table slides (closed chain: shoulder flexion)

**Note – Restrict horizontal Abduction/Adduction (often painful)*

Strengthening Exercises:

- Isometrics
- ER, IR, Abd, Ext, Biceps, Triceps

**Note – No resisted shoulder flexion*

- Initiate ER/IR with exercise tubing at 0 degrees abduction when pain free (usually week 2)

Decrease Pain/Inflammation:

- Ice, NSAIDS, modalities
- Ice applied directly over AC joint

II. PHASE II – INTERMEDIATE PHASE (Weeks 3-8)

- Goals: Gradually regain full ROM (No IR stretching outside of ADLs)
- Regain and improve muscular strength
- Normalize arthrokinematics
- Improve neuromuscular control of shoulder complex

Criteria to Progress to Phase II:

- 1) Nearly full ROM
- 2) Minimal pain and tenderness
- 3) Stable AC joint on clinical exam
- 4) Good (4/5) MMT of ER/IR/Abd

Week 3

Range of Motion Exercises:

- Continue AAROM with L-bar
- Shoulder elevation to at least 160 degrees by week 4
- ER/IR at 90 degrees abduction full ROM

Strengthening Exercises:

- Initiate isotonic strengthening (light resistance)
- Shoulder abduction
- Shoulder extension
- Shoulder ER/IR tubing
- Sidelying ER
- Biceps/triceps
- Prone horizontal abduction
- Prone rowing
- Prone extension
- *Note – Restricted shoulder flexion prohibited (for 4 weeks)*
- Initiate neuromuscular control exercises (PNF)
- Initiate manual resistance
- Continue use of modalities, ice as needed

Week 6

Range of motion exercises:

- Continue stretching program
- *Dr. Santoro Patients (week 6): IR; PROM (begin at 45 degrees abduction, progress to 90 degrees abduction)

Strengthening exercises:

- Continue all strengthening exercises listed above
- Initiate light resistance shoulder flexion
- Initiate upper extremity endurance exercises
- Initiate light isotonic resistance progression
- NO shoulder press or bench press or pect deck or pullovers
- Rhythmic stabilization exercise for shoulder flexion/extension
- Program all shoulder and scapular strengthening exercises

III. PHASE III – DYNAMIC STRENGTHENING PHASE (Weeks 8-16)

Goals:

- Improve strength/power/endurance

- Improve neuromuscular control/dynamic stability to the AC joint
- Prepare athlete for overhead motion

Criteria to Enter Phase III:

1. Full nonpainful ROM
2. No pain or tenderness
3. Strength 70% of contralateral side

Range of motion exercises:

- Continue stretching program
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Strengthening Exercises:

- Continue isotonic strengthening exercises
- Initiate light bench press, shoulder press (progress weight slowly)
- Continue with resistance exercises for:
- Shoulder abduction
- Shoulder ER/IR
- Shoulder flexion
- Latissimus dorsi (rowing, pull-downs)
- Biceps/triceps
- Initiate tubing PNF patterns
- Initiate ER/IR at 90 degrees abduction
- Scapular strengthening (4 directions)
- Emphasis on scapular retractors, elevators
- Neuromuscular control exercises for glenohumeral and scapulothoracic joints
- Rhythmic stabilization
- Shoulder flexion/extension
- Shoulder ER/IR (90/90)
- Shoulder abduction/adduction
- PNF D2 patterns
- Scapular retract/protract
- Scapular elev/depress
- Program to plyometric upper extremity exercises
- Continue stretching to maintain mobility

IV, PHASE IV – RETURN TO ACTIVITY PHASE (Week 16>)

Goals: Progressively increase activities to prepare patient/athlete to full functional return

Criteria to Progress to Phase IV:

- 1) Full nonpainful ROM
 - 2) No pain or tenderness
 - 3) Isokinetic test that fulfills criteria (Shoulder F/E, Abd/Add)
 - 4) Satisfactory clinical exam
- Initiate Interval Sports Program
 - Continue all exercises listed in Phase III
 - Progress resistance exercise levels and stretching