

**Rehabilitation Program:
Rotator Cuff Repair (Large-Massive Tears)**

Phase I (0-6 weeks)

Goals

- Maintain/ protect integrity of repair
- Gradually increase PROM
- Diminish pain and inflammation
- Prevent muscular inhibition

Precautions

- Maintain arm in sling, remove only for shower or exercise
- No shoulder AROM, lifting greater than 5 lbs, shoulder motion behind back, excessive
- stretching or sudden movements, lifting body weight by hands

Week 1

- Abduction brace or sling
- Home dressing change post-op day 2-3
- Finger wrist and elbow AROM
- First follow-up visit 7-10 days
- Scapula musculature isometrics and cervical ROM

Week 2-6

- Physical therapy modalities
- Sling for six weeks, sleeping with brace for at least four weeks
- Shoulder pendulum
- Shoulder Flexion: Seated table slides up to 120
- Begin PROM (supine) flexion to 90, ER 30, IR to body/chest
- May resume general conditioning (walking, stationary bicycle)

Week 5-6

- Heat before exercise or active warm-up, ice after exercise
- Sling for comfort only and discontinue at week 6
- Scapular and glenohumeral joint mobilization as needed to help regain full ROM
- Initiate AAROM flexion, ER, abduction progressing as tolerated

Phase II (6-12 weeks)

Goals

- Allow healing of soft tissue

- Do not overstress healing tissue
- Gradually restore full PROM and AAROM
 - Dr. Santoro Patients
 - Be mindful for capsular tightening
- Decrease pain and inflammation
- Vigilant for adhesive capsulitis

Precautions

- No lifting
- No supporting body weight with hands and arms
- No sudden jerking motions
- No excessive behind the back movements
- Avoid upper extremity bike and ergometer

Weeks 6-8

- Continue PROM, AAROM, and stretching
- Continue periscapular exercises
- Begin rotator cuff isometrics
- Initiate AROM exercises (flexion scapular plane, abduction, IR, ER)

Weeks 10-12

- Continue ROM as needed
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- Add internal rotation (behind back) stretching
- Dynamic stabilization exercises
- Initiate strengthening program
 - ER and IR with exercise bands
 - ER side lying
 - Lateral Raise
 - Prone rowing
 - Prone horizontal abduction
 - Prone extension
- Initiate light functional activities as tolerated

Phase III (12-16 weeks)

Goals

- Full AROM
- Maintain PROM
- Dynamic shoulder stability
- Gradual restoration of shoulder strength, power, and endurance
- Optimize neuromuscular control
- Gradual return to functional activities

Precautions

- No lifting objects >5 lbs
- No sudden lifting or pushing
- No overhead lifting

Weeks 12

- Continue all previous exercises
- Progress to fundamental shoulder exercises

Week 16

- Continue ROM and self-capsular stretching
- Advance proprioceptive, neuromuscular activities
- Light sports (golf chipping/putting, tennis ground strokes)
- Begin PREs,
 - Long Arm PNF
 - Open Chain
 - Isotonics & Isokinetics

Phase IV (16 weeks to 9 months)

Goals

- Maintain full nonpainful AROM
- Improve muscular strength, power, and endurance
- Gradual return to full functional activities

Week 20

- Initiate interval sport program