**Rotator Cuff Repair Protocol Large (5+ cm)**

### Rehab Progression Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 weeks</td>
<td>Immobilization: abd.pillow for 6 weeks; sling for comfort afterwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-6 weeks</td>
<td>Passive ROM (Phase I); ok to perform PROM above abd. pillow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 weeks</td>
<td>Active-assisted ROM (Phase II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-12 weeks</td>
<td>Active ROM (Phase III)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16+ weeks</td>
<td>Strengthening (Phase IV)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Immobilization

- Sling/abd. pillow is worn for 6 weeks during the day and night
- Remove sling for light activity and home exercise program as indicated by therapist

### Phase I - PROM

1st post-op visit
2nd post-op visit
2-6 weeks

**Goals for treatment:**
- Decrease pain and swelling
- Increase nutrition and healing response
- Infection prevention

**PROM:**
- Begin passive ROM exercises in clinic
- Pendulum exercise without weight: clockwise, counterclockwise, side-to-side, front-back
- **PROM above abd. pillow:** ER, IR, flexion, extension, abduction
- Table slides
- Therapist: grade I, II joint mobilizations
- Scapular retractions
- Wrist/elbow exercises; grip exercises

**Patient education:**
- Wound inspection
- Begin active assisted ROM at 6 weeks
- No active motion for 8 weeks, all planes
• No active external rotation for 6 weeks
• Limit external rotation to neutral for 6 weeks
• Sling use as indicated by repair
• Icing 3x/day for 20 minutes

Other:
• Ice
• Modalities - PRN

**Phase II - Assisted-AROM**

6 weeks post-op

AROM:
• Pendulum exercises with light weight
• AAROM with cane & pullies, to patient tolerance (flexion, abduction - ER to neutral)
• Body Blade - opposite hand, straight plane
• Shoulder shrugs - light weight/high reps

Progress with:
• Wall climbing/finger ladder
• Scar mobility
• Joint mobilizations - grade I/II
• Quadruped rhythmic stabilization
• Body Blade - opposite hand diagonals with trunk rotation
• Biceps curls
• Shoulder extension with Theraband
• Shoulder shrugs
• UBE - active assist only

Other:
• Ice
• Modalities - PRN

**Phase III - AROM**

8 weeks post-op

AROM:
• Continue with Phase II A-AROM
• AAROM exercises with cane
• AROM - all planes
• UBE - forward/reverse
• Scapular retraction
• Prone extension
• Supine “holds” at 90° flexion; progress to small circles
• Side-lying “holds” at 90° abduction; progress to small circles
• Isometrics <50% effort, no pain (flexion, extension, abduction, ER)
• Biceps curls/triceps extensions with light resistences, elbow at side

Other:
• Ice
• Modalities - PRN
12 weeks post-op

Goal: Should have full PROM; ER to ______ ° only, with gentle passive stretching

AROM:
• Continue with Phase III exercises, adding weight/resistance as indicated by therapist
• Low-weight exercise (begin at 90° and increase to full ROM): flexion/extension, abduction, rows, scaption
• Wall push-ups, wall push-ups plus
• Shoulder IR/ER with low resistance
• Scapular protraction ( “serratus punch”) 
• Prone fly

Other:
• Ice
• Modalities - PRN

PHASE IV - STRENGTH

16+ weeks post-op

Goal: Should have full AROM; if not, begin aggressive stretching to achieve full ROM

Strength:
• Body Blade, involved extremity: one-handed grip, abduction to 90°; two-handed grip, flexion to 90°
• Kneeling push-ups, kneeling push-ups plus
• Step-ups in kneeling push-up position
• UBE with increased resistance
• StairMaster in quadruped at level 12-15
• Treadmill in quadruped at 1.0 mph
• Plyoball: circles, CW & CCW, 1 minute each direction; squares, CW & CCW, 1 minute each direction

Other:
• Ice
• Modalities - PRN

RETURN TO SPORT-SPECIFIC TRAINING

16+ weeks post-op

• Continue with Phase IV Strength, increasing reps and resistance as tolerated
• Isokinetic testing at Vanderbilt Sports Medicine as directed by physician
• Functional testing at Vanderbilt Sports Medicine as directed by physician
• Push-ups, push-ups plus
• Step-ups in push-up position
• Sport-specific exercises as directed by physician and therapist

Other:
• Ice
• Modalities - PRN