



## Arthroscopic Rotator Cuff Repair (Massive Tear) Rehabilitation Protocol

### **JARED M. MAHYLIS, MD**

Specialty Physicians of Illinois  
Olympia Fields, IL

#### **Phase I: (0 to 8 weeks after surgery)**

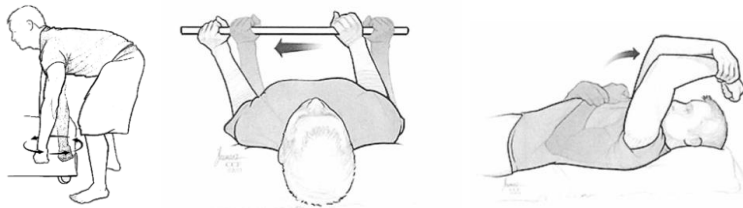
##### Goals: Protect Repair

1. Patients may remove dressing and shower 5 days after surgery. You may get the incision wet.
2. Sutures will be removed in clinic at your 1<sup>st</sup> follow up visit. These should be left in place.
3. Ice is recommended to reduce swelling and help with pain. You should continue this for the first week at a minimum. Apply the ice to the surgical site 3-4 times per day once the nerve block has worn off.
4. You should maintain your sling when not performing exercises.
  - a. Initiate the following exercise program 3 times per day:
    - i. Immediate elbow, forearm, wrist, and hand range of motion out of sling . You may perform nonresistance, non-weight bearing use of the hand for activities such as typing on a computer or using a tablet computer.
    - ii. **NO ACTIVE OR PASSIVE SHOULDER MOTION!**
    - iii. No lifting or weight bearing with the operative arm.

#### **Phase II: (8 weeks to 4 months after surgery)**

##### Goals: Initiate ROM & Protect Repair

1. Stop use of the sling.
2. No lifting or weight bearing on arm.
3. No active motion of the arm.
4. Continue, elbow, wrist, and hand use for nonresistance/non weightbearing activities.
5. Start active assisted and passive ROM:
  - a. Start gentle pendulums (see below)
  - b. ER at the side to 50 degrees and forward flexion to 150 degrees (see below).



#### **Phase III: (4 to 6 months after surgery)**

##### Goal: Progress ROM & Imitate strengthening.

1. May lift 10 lb or less with progression to 20 lbs by 6 months
2. Advance active and passive ROM in all planes to tolerance.
  - a. ER at the side and flexion to tolerance
  - b. Scapular plane elevation to tolerance
  - c. IR and extension to tolerance
3. Initiate gentle rotator cuff strengthening (see below)



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Shoulder & Elbow Surgeon

4. Continue scapular stabilizer strengthening.

**Phase IV: (>6-9 months after surgery)**

1. Removal of lifting restrictions at 6 months
2. Continued functional strengthening
3. Return to activity at 9 months.