

Ronak M. Patel, MD
Arthroscopic Decompression/Debridement of the Shoulder
Rehabilitation Guidelines

Phase I Early Motion Phase
Post-Op days 1-14

Goals

1. Re-establish non-painful range of motion
2. Retard muscle atrophy
3. Decrease pain and inflammation

Activities

- Range of Motion:
 - Codman's pendulum exercises
 - Pulley activities (flexion/extension only)
 - Wand activities
 - flexion/extension
 - abduction/adduction
 - external/internal rotation (begin at 0 degrees, progress to 45 degrees, and then 90 degrees of abduction)
 - Self-stretches (capsular)
- Strengthening Exercises:
 - Isometrics
 - May begin tubing for external/internal rotation at 0 degrees late phase
- Decrease Pain and Inflammation:
 - Ice
 - NSAIDs
 - Modalities as needed

Phase II Intermediate Phase
Post-Op Weeks 3 - 6

Goals

- Regain and improve muscular strength
- Normalize arthrokinematics
- Improve neuromuscular control of shoulder complex

Criteria to progress to Phase II

- Full range of motion
- Minimal pain and tenderness
- "Good" (4/5) manual muscle test of internal/external rotation and flexion

Activities

- Initiate isotonic program with dumbbells
 - Internal/external rotation
 - Abduction to 90 degrees
 - Flexion to 90 degrees
 - Supraspinatus
 - Biceps/triceps
- Normalize arthrokinematics of the shoulder complex
 - Joint mobilization
 - Gleno-humeral joint
 - Acromioclavicular joint
 - Sternoclavicular joint
 - ST joint
- Control wand range of motion
- Initiate neuromuscular control exercises
- Initiate trunk exercises
- Initiate upper extremity endurance activities (UBE)
- Continue with modalities as needed
 - Initiate cardiovascular training, strength training

Phase III Dynamic Strengthening Phase Post-Op Weeks 7-12

Goals

- Improve strength/power/endurance
- Improve neuromuscular control
- Prepare athlete to begin to throw, etc.

Criteria to enter Phase III

- Full non-painful range of motion
- No pain or tenderness
- Strength 70 percent of uninvolved side

Activities

- Continue dumbbell strengthening
 - Supraspinatus
 - Deltoid
- Initiate tubing exercises in the 90/90 position for internal/external rotation
 - Slow sets
 - Fast sets
- Tubing exercises for scapulothoracic musculature
- Tubing exercises for biceps
- Initiate plyometrics for rotator cuff muscles

- Initiate diagonal patterns
 - D2 flexion/extension patterns
- Initiate isokinetics
 - External/internal rotation in scapular plane
- Continue endurance exercises, neuromuscular control exercises

Phase IV Return to Activity Phase

13 - 16 weeks

Goals

- Progressively increased activities to prepare patient for full functional return

Criteria to progress to phase IV

- Full range of motion
- No pain or tenderness
- 2 weeks pain-free 90/90 shoulder rotation work
- Isokinetic test that fulfills criteria to throw*
- Satisfactory clinical exam*

Activities

- Initiate interval throwing program*
- Continue all exercises in phase III
 - Throw and train on the same day*
- Lower extremity and range of motion on opposite days
- Progress interval program*
- Initiate hitting program when athlete can throw 90 feet pain-free*

*For Overhead Throwing Athletes