ROTATOR CUFF REPAIR

The following is a protocol for postoperative patients following rotator cuff repair. The primary goal of this protocol is to protect the repair while steadily progressing towards and ultimately achieving pre-injury level of activity. Please note this protocol is a guideline. Patients with additional surgery will progress at different rates. Achieving the criteria of each phase should be emphasized more than the approximate duration. If a patient should develop an increase in pain or swelling or decrease in motion at any time, activity should be decreased until problems are resolved.

**PHASE I: 1-21 DAYS POSTOPERATIVE**

**GOALS:**
- Pain control
- AAROM Flexion and Abduction to 90 degrees

**AMBULATION AND BRACE USE**
Immobilizer with abductor pillow x 4-6 weeks – Even while sleeping
– Place pillow under shoulder / arm while sleeping for comfort

**EXERCISES:**
Hand squeezing exercises
Elbow and wrist active motion (AROM) with shoulder in neutral position at side
Supported pendulum exercises
Shoulder shrugs / scapular retraction without resistance
PROM by therapist / Active assist motion (AAROM) w/ pulleys or supine w/ wand
– Flexion to 90 degrees
– Abduction to 90 degrees
– ER to within 30 degrees of opposite shoulder
Stationary bike (must wear immobilizer)
Ice pack

**PHASE II: ~3-6 WEEKS POSTOPERATIVE**

**GOALS:**
- AAROM Flexion and Abduction to 150 degrees

**AMBULATION AND BRACE USE:**
Continue immobilizer x 4-6 weeks

**EXERCISES:**
Continue appropriate previous exercises
Full pendulum exercises
AAROM – Flexion and Abduction > 90 degrees (pulleys, supine wand)
– ER as tolerated (wand, doorway stretch)
– IR as tolerated if no subscapularis repair (wand behind back)
1-2 Finger Isometrics x 6 (fist in box)

**PHASE III: ~4-8 WEEKS POSTOPERATIVE**

**GOALS:**
- Full AROM

**AMBULATION AND BRACE USE:**
D/C Immobilizer

**EXERCISES:**
Continue appropriate previous exercises
AROM, AAROM through full range
Light Theraband ex x 6
Standing rows with Theraband
Prone scapular retraction exercises (without weights)
Biceps and Triceps PREs with light weight
UBE forwards and backwards with low resistance
Stairmaster
Treadmill – Walking progression program
Pool walking / running – No UE resistive exercises

**PHASE IV: ~9-12 WEEKS POSTOPERATIVE**
GOALS:
- Normal rotator cuff strength
- 30 wall push-ups

EXERCISES:
Continue appropriate previous exercises
PROM / mobilization as needed to regain full ROM
Theraband ex with increased resistance as tolerated
Seated row weight machine with light weight
Body Blade
Ball on wall (arcs, alphabet)
BAPS on hands
Ball toss with arm at side using light ball
Push-up progression against wall
Elliptical trainer
Pool therapy – With UE resistance

PHASE V: ~3-4 MONTHS POSTOPERATIVE

GOALS:
- 30 chair push-ups
- Run 2 miles at easy pace

EXERCISES:
Continue appropriate previous exercises
Push-up progression – Table to chair
Ball toss overhead
Fitter on hands
Treadmill – Running progression program

PHASE VI: ~4-6 MONTHS POSTOPERATIVE

GOALS:
- Return to all activities

EXERCISES:
Continue appropriate previous exercises
Weight training with light resistance (no overhead press or pull downs)
Gravitron – Pull-ups and dips
Push-ups, regular
Sit-ups
Swimming
Running progression to track
Transition to home / gym program

No contact sports until 9 months post-op

**This protocol is designed to be administered by a licensed physical therapist and/or certified athletic trainer. Please do not hesitate to contact our office should you have any questions concerning the rehabilitation process.**