ACROMIOICLAVICULAR AND STERNOCLAVICULAR JOINT RECONSTRUCTION
POSTOPERATIVE REHABILITATION PROTOCOL

The following is a protocol for postoperative patients following AC or SC joint reconstruction surgery. The primary goal of this protocol is to protect the reconstruction while steadily progressing towards and ultimately achieving preinjury 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.

**Post-op Days 1 – 7**
Sling x 4 weeks – Even while sleeping
– Place pillow under shoulder / arm while sleeping for comfort
Hand squeezing exercises
Elbow and wrist active motion (AROM) with shoulder in neutral position at side
Supported pendulum exercises
Ice pack
**Goal** – Pain control

**Weeks 1 – 4**
Continue sling x 4 wks
Continue appropriate previous exercises
Active assisted motion (AAROM) supine with wand
– Flexion to 90 degrees
– Abduction to 60 degrees
– ER as tolerated
Gentle shoulder shrugs / scapular retraction without resistance
1-2 Finger Isometrics x 6 (fist in box)
Stationary bike (must wear sling)
**Goals**
Pain control
AAROM Flexion to 90 degrees, Abduction to 60 degrees

**Weeks 4 – 6**
D/C Sling
Continue appropriate previous exercises
AAROM supine with wand – ER as tolerated, Flex and Abd same as above
Full pendulum exercises
Light Theraband ex – ER and IR with pillow or towel roll under arm
– Flexion, Extension, Abduction, Scaption to 60 degrees
Standing rows with Theraband
Biceps and supine Triceps PREs with light weight
Treadmill – Walking progression program
**Goal** – Maintain AAROM Flexion to 90 degrees, Abduction to 60 degrees
**Weeks 6 – 8**
Continue appropriate previous exercises with increased resistance as tolerated
AAROM – Flexion and Abduction to 90 degrees (supine wand)
– ER as tolerated
– IR as tolerated (wand behind back)
Body blade
Elliptical trainer **with LEs only**

**Goals**
AAROM Abduction to 90 degrees
Normal rotator cuff strength

**Weeks 8 – 10**
Continue appropriate previous exercises
AAROM – Flexion and Abduction to 120 degrees (wand, pulley, wall climb)
AROM – Flexion and Abduction to 120 degrees, pain-free
Prone scapular retraction exercises (light weight)
Ball on wall (arcs, alphabet)
BAPS on hands
Push-up plus against wall
UBE forwards and backwards at low resistance
Stairmaster
Pool walking / running – No upper extremity (UE) resistive exercises

**Goals**
AROM Flexion and Abduction to 120 degrees
30 wall push-ups

**Weeks 10 – 12**
Continue appropriate previous exercises
AAROM and AROM through full range
PROM / mobilization as needed to regain full motion
Push-up progression – Wall to table
Ball toss with arm at side
Treadmill – Running progression program
Pool therapy – With UE resistance

**Goals**
Full AROM
30 table push-ups
**Months 3 – 4**
Continue appropriate previous exercises
Push-up progression – Table to chair
Ball toss overhead
Fitter on hands
Weight training with light weight

**Goals**
Run 2 miles at easy pace
30 chair push-ups

**Months 4 – 6**
Continue appropriate previous exercises
Push-ups, regular
Sit-ups
Swimming
Running progression to track
Progressive weight training program
Transition to home / gym program

**Goals**
Resume all activities

*No contact sports until 6 months post-op*