



Standard Non-Surgical Rotator Cuff Injury Rehabilitation Protocol

Phase	Goals	Precautions / Restrictions	Treatment
Weeks 0 – 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain/improve range of motion (ROM) to comparable shoulder ● Decrease pain and protective/compensatory behaviors ● Maintain cardiovascular fitness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Avoid provocative maneuvers, motions or exercises that cause discomfort ● Avoid sling use unless otherwise directed by physician 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Passive to Active Assisted Shoulder ROM in all planes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pendulum ○ Flexion ○ Abduction ○ External Rotation ○ Internal Rotation ● Initiate postural and periscapular strengthening ● Maintain full active elbow, wrist and hand ROM ● Complete ADL's with affected arm as able with minimal to no pain. ● Criteria for progression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Minimal pain and tenderness ○ Improvement of active/passive ROM ○ Return to functional ROM ● Initial visit: FOTO, QuickDASH
Weeks 4 – 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Full active shoulder ROM in all planes ● Initiate strength/resistance training 2-3x/week ● Maintain cardiovascular fitness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Avoid provocative maneuvers, motions or exercises that cause discomfort ● Avoid high velocity or high load activities of the shoulder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● AAROM to AROM/ Functional ROM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Flexion ○ Abduction ○ External Rotation ○ Internal Rotation ○ Hand Behind Head ○ Hand Behind Back ● Initiate Isometric Exercises <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rotator Cuff ○ Deltoid ● Progress to Isotonic exercises as able with low loads and little to no pain ● Criteria for progression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Full painless active ROM ○ No pain or tenderness with strengthening exercises ● Week 6: FOTO, QuickDASH
Weeks 8 – 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improve shoulder complex strength, power and endurance ● Progressive, Systematic Interval Program for Returning to Sports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Overhead Athletes ○ Tennis ○ Golf 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Appropriate progression of increased velocity and loaded activities of the shoulder ● Adherence to Soreness Rules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strength <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Isotonic strength training exercises with progressive overload ● Plyometric Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Focus on speed/velocity of movement ● Sport Specific Training ● Week 12-16: FOTO, QuickDASH

This protocol is not meant to be prescriptive but a recommendation to guide the rehabilitation process.

Each patient's progress may vary based on specifics of their injury and procedure.

