

Post-op Rehabilitation

Rotator Cuff Surgery

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Activity Limits

Showering: 48 Hours
Deskwork: When comfortable with sling
Driving: 6 weeks
Using arm for Activities of Daily Living: 6 weeks
Using arm to reach overhead: 12 weeks
Using arm to reach behind back: 6 weeks
Using arm to carry objects: 6 weeks
Pushing/Pulling: 6 weeks
Sport/Heavy Activity: When finished with therapy program

Exercise Program

Therapy is to begin within 7 days after surgery. Exercises should be done each day at home or with a therapist. The program is four sections. ***Do not move on to the next section until the correct time after surgery.***

Pain Exercises should NOT be painful. If they are, please stop and ask advice

Time Most shoulders take 3 to six months to achieve an excellent result. On some occasions - up to a year. Remember to be patient.

Effort Remember that surgery simply fixes the torn muscles and tendons. A good result depends on the patient rebuilding a strong and functional shoulder.

This rehab program is designed to be done at home with minimal equipment. Many physiotherapists are experts at rotator cuff rehab. Please take this with you to your physio and discuss what is best for you. If you or your physio want further copies – we are happy to supply more

Phase 1: Passive Motion (0-6 Weeks after Surgery)

Phase 1: Passive Range of Motion 0-6 Weeks

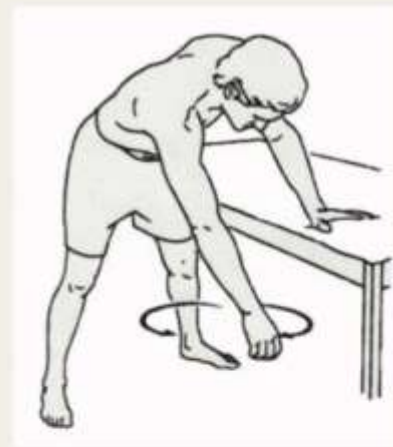
Passive range of motion is to begin within 14 days after surgery. Passive range of motion requires the therapist or an assistant at home to put the arm through a comfortable range of motion while the patient is supine. Motions include forward elevation, external rotation, and abduction—all within a comfortable range. These exercises are done with each therapy visit, three times each week.

In addition, pendulum exercises can be initiated during this time. These can be done at home, twice each day.



PASSIVE RANGE OF MOTION

The patient lies supine and relaxes. The therapist will move the arm. The patient should relax and should not contract any muscles while the therapist moves the arm. This should be done at each therapy visit, three times each week.



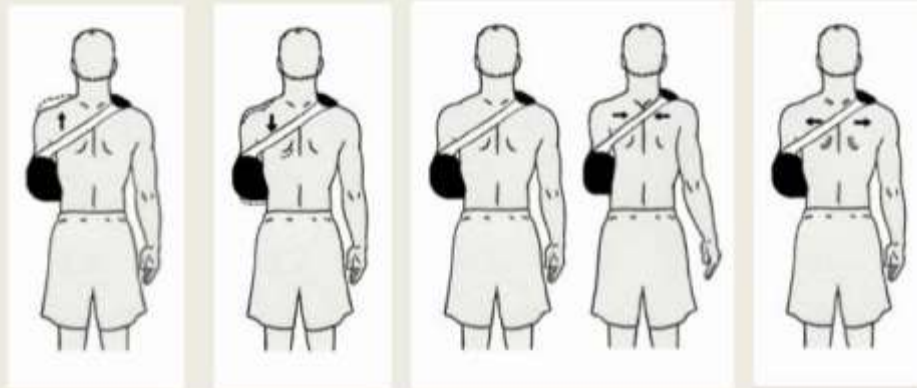
PENDULUM EXERCISES

Use torso to move arm by rocking body weight. Go in clockwise direction then counter clockwise. Pendulum exercises can be done twice each day.

Phase 1: Scapula Exercises (1-12 Weeks after Surgery)

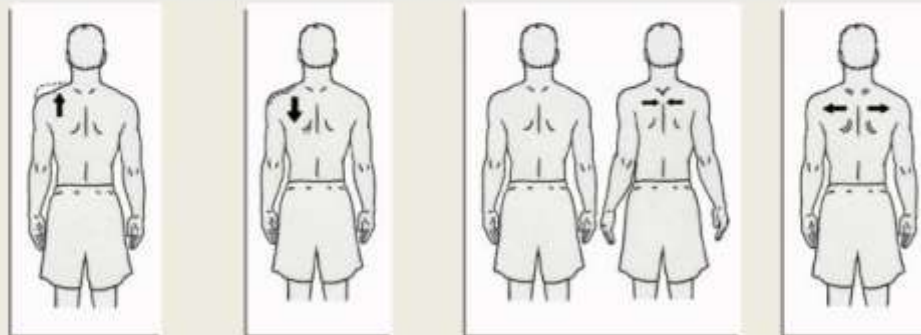
Phase 1: Scapula Stabilizer Exercises

These exercises begin within 1 week, and are done while the arm is in the sling. These exercises should include raising the shoulders, lowering the shoulders, pressing the shoulder together, and apart. Six weeks after surgery, these can be done out of the sling until strengthening exercises begin, 12 weeks after surgery. These can be done daily.



SCAPULA EXERCISES WITH SLING – 0-6 WEEKS AFTER SURGERY

While sitting or standing and wearing the sling bring shoulder up as you shrug, down as you lower the shoulder, together toward the spine, and apart. Practice upright posture. These can be done daily.



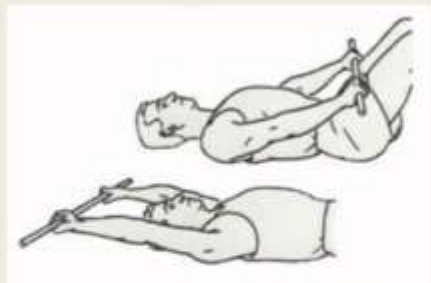
SCAPULA EXERCISES WITHOUT SLING – 6 WEEKS AFTER SURGERY

After six weeks, these can be done without the sling, with the arm at the side. These can be done daily.

Phase 2: Active Assisted Motion (6 Weeks after Surgery)

Phase 2: Active Assisted Range of Motion 6 Weeks

6 weeks after surgery the second phase starts with active assisted range of motion. The patient lies flat and uses the healthy arm (or a stick or cane) to move the injured arm up in front of the body, to the side beside the body, and up and to the side. These can be done daily.



LYING ACTIVE ASSISTED FORWARD ELEVATION
Using a stick or cane, the healthy arm will move the injured arm over the head.



LYING ACTIVE ASSISTED EXTERNAL ROTATION
Keep the injured arm tucked close to the body. Bend the elbow so the hand is pointed to the ceiling. Using a cane, the healthy arm moves the injured arm away from the body.

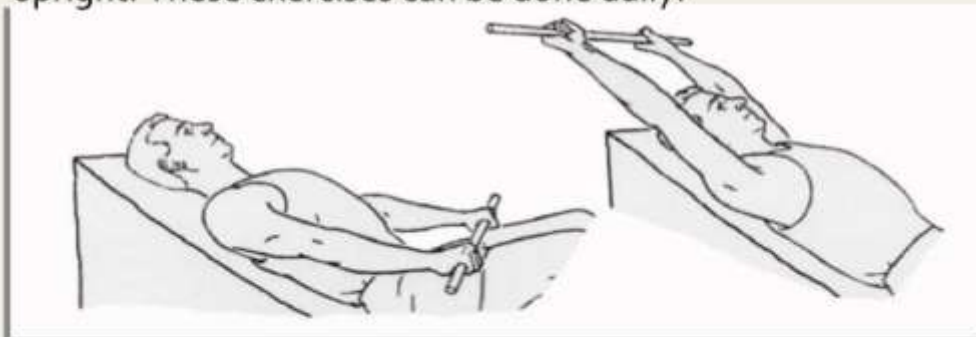


LYING ACTIVE ASSISTED ABDUCTION
While keeping the elbow of the injured arm straight, the healthy arm will move the injured arm out to the side of the body as high as comfortable.

Phase 2: Active Assisted Motion (6 Weeks after Surgery)

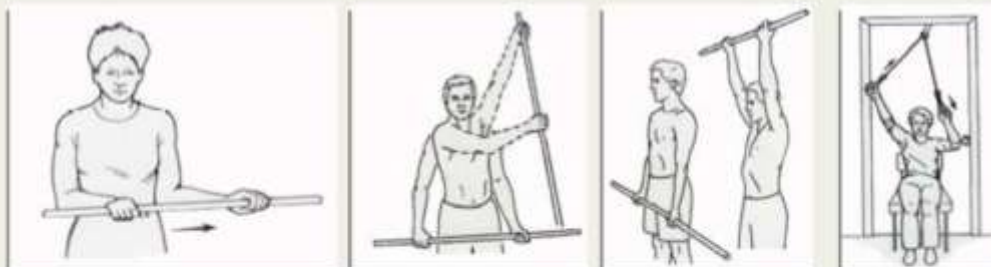
Phase 2: Active Assisted Range of Motion 6-9 Weeks

Seven weeks after surgery the patient's back is propped up approximately 45 degrees and uses the unaffected arm to move the postoperative arm (or a cane or stick) into forward elevation, external rotation, and abduction. After 8 weeks, the patient can do these exercises while upright. These exercises can be done daily.



45 DEGREE ACTIVE ASSISTED RANGE OF MOTION

While propped on a pillow at 45 degrees and using a stick or cane, the normal arm will move the affected arm over the head. The arm is moved in forward elevation, abduction, and external rotation. This begins 5 weeks after surgery and is done daily.



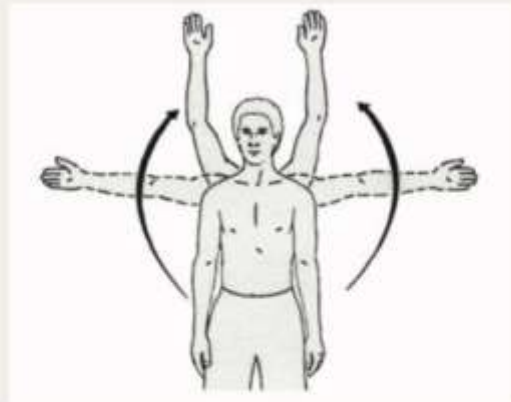
UPRIGHT ACTIVE ASSISTED RANGE OF MOTION

Six weeks after surgery using a stick or cane, the normal arm will move the affected arm in external rotation, abduction and forward elevation while upright. Sitting in a chair while using pulleys is allowed at this time as well. These exercises should be done daily.

Phase 3: Active Motion (10 Weeks after Surgery)

Phase 3: Active Range of Motion 10-12 Weeks

While continuing to work on active assisted range of motion, the patient now begins active range of motion in forward elevation, external rotation and abduction. In addition, isometric strengthening exercises begin at this time. These exercises can be done daily.



ACTIVE RANGE OF MOTION

While upright, the patient moves the arm in front of the body (forward elevation) and to the side of the body (abduction)



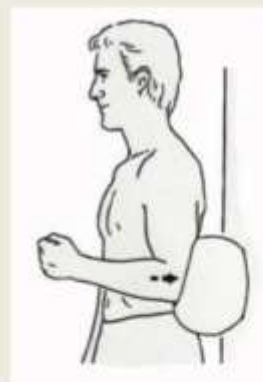
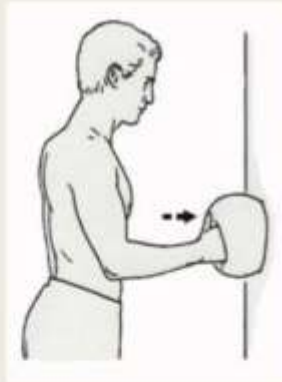
ACTIVE RANGE OF MOTION

It is important to avoid "hiking" the shoulder. Place the uninvolved hand on the affected shoulder, or do these exercises in front of a mirror to avoid this.

Phase 3: Isometric Exercise (12 Weeks after Surgery)

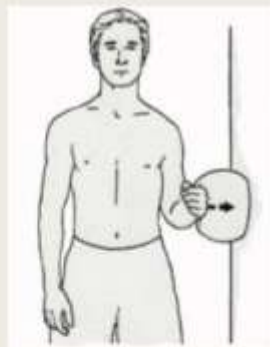
Phase 3: Isometric Exercises 12 Weeks

Beginning 12 weeks after surgery the patient can begin isometric exercises. Using a pillow or folded towel the patient applies pressure to the wall without moving the shoulder.



ISOMETRIC PUSH AND PULL

With a pillow against the wall, and the arm tucked close to the body, create pressure with the fist for forward push, and with the elbow to push backward. Hold the position for 15 seconds then rest for 30 seconds. Repeat this 10-15 times. This can be done daily.



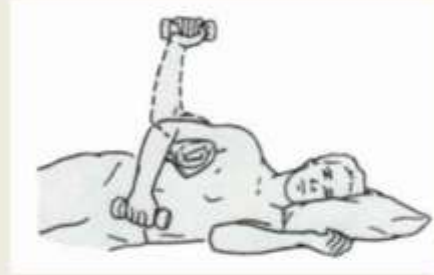
ISOMETRIC EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL ROTATION

With a pillow against a wall, and the arm tucked close to the body, create pressure with the back of the hand for external rotation, and with the palm of the hand for internal rotation. Hold the position for 15 seconds then rest for 30 seconds. Repeat this 10-15 times. This can be done daily.

Phase 4: Resisted Exercises (12-16 Weeks after Surgery)

Phase 4: Resisted Exercises 12-16 Weeks.

After 12 weeks, the patient can begin strengthening. Resisted exercise uses elastic bands and/or hand weights. These should be done 3 days per week. Each exercise should be done 10-15 times followed by 2 minutes of rest, and repeated 3-4 times.



ROTATOR CUFF STRENGTHENING

With the arm tucked close to the body, pull the rubber tubing across your stomach. Turn around to pull the tubing away from your stomach. You may also lie on your healthy side with your injured side arm up, and your elbow bent holding a hand weight; move your hand away from your belly. Do 10-15 times, for 3-4 sets, for 3 days/week.



DELTOID STRENGTHENING

With the arm tucked close to the body, pull rubber tubing while doing forward punches. Turn around pull the tubing to the body. Do 10-15 times, for 3-4 sets, for 3 days/week.

DO NOT DO FULL-CAN OR EMPTY-CAN EXERCISES!
These place too much stress on the shoulder.

Phase 4: Resisted Exercises (12-16 Weeks after Surgery)

Phase 4: Resisted Exercises 12-16 Weeks.

These exercises are for strengthening.

RESISTED SCAPULA STRENGTHENING

Strengthening exercises should be done 10-15 times, followed by 2 minutes of rest, and repeated as 3-4 sets. These should be done 3 days each week.



Stand straight up. Keep your elbows straight while pulling the elastic band backwards, trying to reach behind you.



Lie on your back, elbow locked straight, arms stretched up towards the ceiling with weights in hand. Push arms up towards the ceiling as far as possible.



Fasten elastic to a stable object, pull elastic back and squeeze shoulder blades together.



Slightly bend hips and knees and support upper body with other arm as shown. Lift arm up, raising elbow to shoulder height.

Phase 4: Resisted Exercises (12-16 Weeks after Surgery)

Phase 4: Resisted Exercises 12-16 Weeks.

These exercises include light stretching.

SHOULDER STRETCHING

Stretching should be done daily. Hold each stretch for 15 seconds, rest for 15 seconds, and repeat 5 times. Begin with gentle stretching. After 16 weeks, aggressive stretching may be used if needed.



Place hands or forearms at shoulder level in a corner of a room. Lean forward into corner and hold.



Hold injured arm over shoulder with towel. Hold bottom of the towel with healthy arm. Slowly pull downward with healthy arm until gentle stretch is felt in back of shoulder.



Bring injured arm across front of body. Hold elbow with other arm. Gently flex the bent arm which will pull the other arm across the chest until a stretch is felt in the back of the shoulder.



Lie on your side on a flat surface. Bring injured arm across the front of your body. Push down on hand towards table. Gently pull across chest until a stretch is felt in the back of shoulder.

This protocol is based on recommendations of the MOON Shoulder Group

The MOON Shoulder group is a Multi-center Orthopaedic Outcomes Network. In other words, it is a group of doctors from around the world working together to do research so they can give patients with shoulder problems the best possible care.

Your doctor, athletic trainer or physical therapist can help guide you through this program.

