



Post-Operative Rotator Cuff Repair Protocol

Patient Instructions

Delayed Therapy

Introduction

The MOON Shoulder Group is a group of shoulder experts who study the best ways to treat patients with rotator cuff tears. The treatment program in this book is based on the best available evidence. When no information was available, the MOON Shoulder Group experts came up with an agreement for treatment.

Do not add or skip any part of this program. If you have concerns, please contact your surgeon.

General Instructions

Icing	Patients are urged to ice after surgery.
Exercise Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Therapy is to begin within 6 weeks after surgery. • Exercises should be done once per day either at home or with a therapist. The exercise program is divided into four sections. Do not move into the next section until the correct time after surgery.
Activity Limits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showering: 48 Hours • Deskwork: When comfortable with sling • Driving: 6 weeks • Using arm for Activities of Daily Living (no weight): 6 weeks • Using arm to reach overhead: 12 weeks • Using arm to reach behind back: 12 weeks • Using arm to carry objects: 12 weeks • Pushing/Pulling: 12 weeks • Sport/Heavy Activity: When finished with therapy program
Rehab Diary	Please keep track of therapy visits and exercises done at home in a Rehab Diary. Please bring the diary to each visit.
Questions/Concerns	If you have questions or concerns, please contact your surgeon.

Phase 1

Passive Motion (6-10 Weeks after Surgery)

Passive range of motion is to begin 6 weeks after surgery. The therapist will move the arm through a comfortable range of motion while the patient is lying down. Motions include raising the arm in front of the body, turning the arm out to the side of the body, and raising the arm up and to the side – all within a comfortable range. *These exercises are done with each therapy visit, three times each week.*

Plus, pendulum exercises can be started during this time. *These can be done at home, twice each day.*



PASSIVE RANGE OF MOTION

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

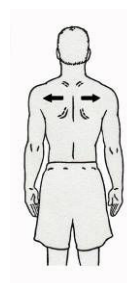
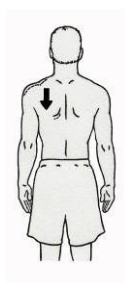
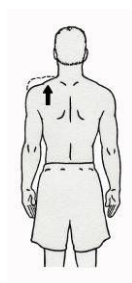
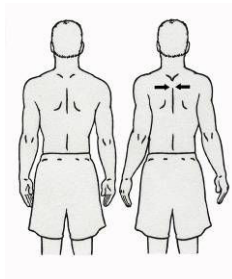
PENDULUM EXERCISES

Use the upper body to move arm by rocking the body. Go in a clockwise direction then counter clockwise. *These exercises can be done twice each day.*



Scapula Exercises (6-18 Weeks after Surgery)

These exercises begin after 6 weeks. 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, 18 weeks after surgery. *These can be done daily.*



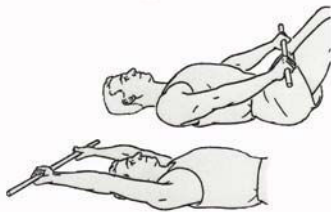
SCAPULA EXERCISES

While sitting or standing 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.

Phase 2

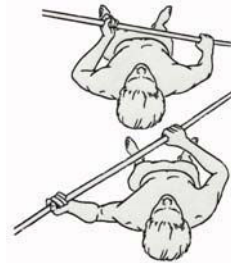
Active Assisted Motion (10 Weeks after Surgery)

10 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.

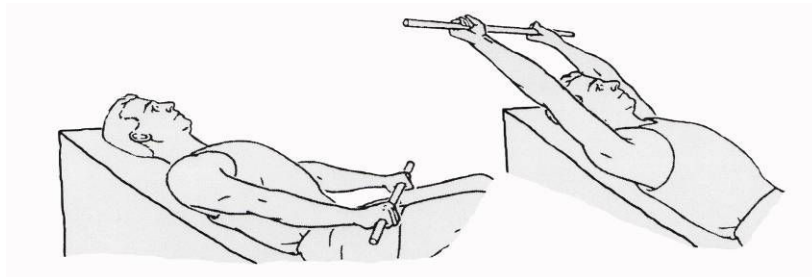


LYING ACTIVE ASSISTED ABDUCTION

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.

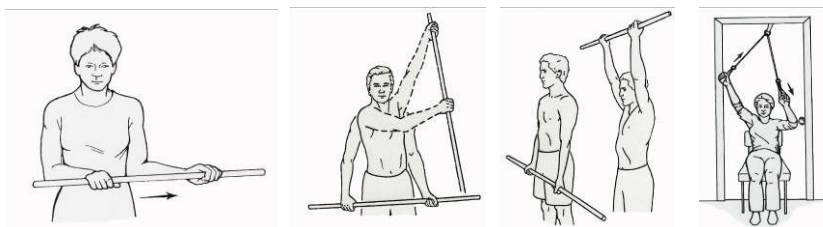
Active Assisted Motion (11-14 Weeks after Surgery)

Eleven weeks after surgery the patient's back is propped up on a pillow. Using the healthy arm to move the injured arm with a cane or stick, the arm is moved up and in front of the body, to the side of the body, and up and to the side. After twelve weeks, these exercises can be done while sitting up or standing. *These exercises can be done daily.*



45 DEGREE ACTIVE ASSISTED RANGE OF MOTION

While propped on a pillow using a stick or cane, the healthy arm will move the injured arm over the head. The arm is moved in up and in front of the body, to the side of the body, and up and to the side. This begins 11 weeks after surgery and is *done daily*.



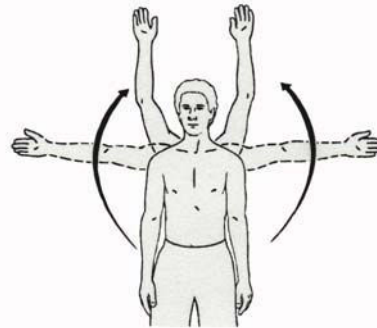
UPRIGHT ACTIVE ASSISTED RANGE OF MOTION

Twelve weeks after surgery using a stick or cane, the healthy arm will move the injured arm up and in front of the body, to the side of the body, and up and to the side while sitting up or standing. Using pulleys while sitting in a chair is also allowed at this time. *These exercises should be done daily.*

Phase 3

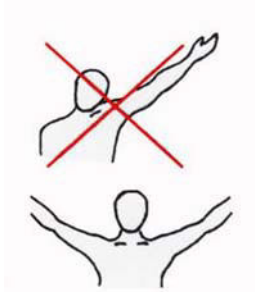
Active Motion (14-18 Weeks after Surgery)

While still working on active assisted range of motion, active range of motion begins. Raise the arm(s) up in front of the body and up and to the side. *These exercises can be done daily.*



ACTIVE RANGE OF MOTION

While sitting up or standing, move the injured arm in front of the body and to the side of the body.

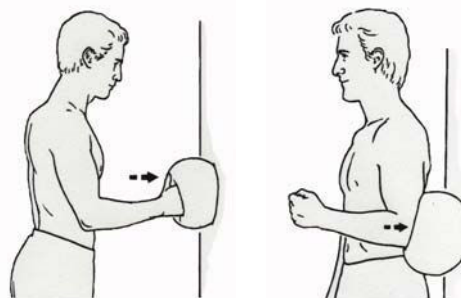


ACTIVE RANGE OF MOTION

It is important to not “hike” the shoulder. Place the hand from the healthy arm on the injured shoulder, or do these in front of a mirror to avoid this.

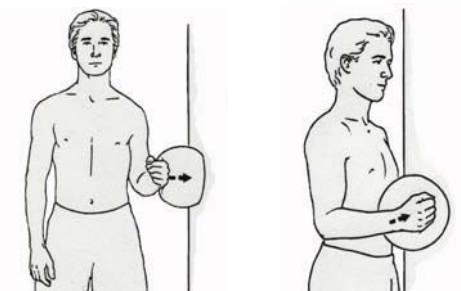
Isometric Exercise (14-18 Weeks after Surgery)

Beginning 14 weeks after surgery the patient can begin isometric exercises. Using a pillow or folded towel the patient pushes against the wall without moving the shoulder



ISOMETRIC PUSH AND PULL

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



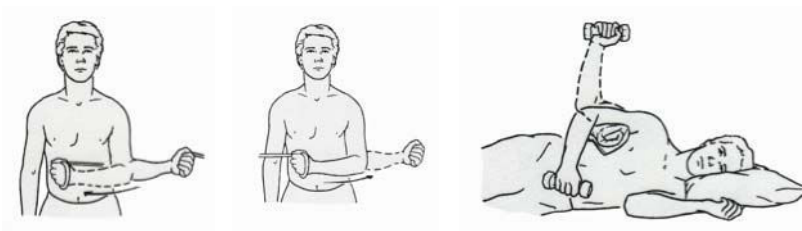
ISOMETRIC EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL ROTATION

With a pillow against a wall, and the arm tucked close to the body, push against the wall with the back of the hand, and with the palm of the hand. *Hold while pushing for 15 seconds then rest for 30 seconds. Repeat this 10-15 times. This can be done daily.*

Phase 4:

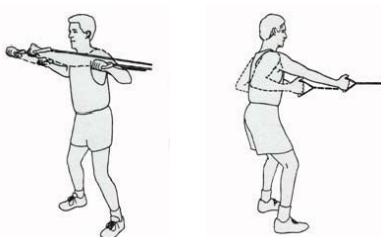
Resisted Exercises (18-22 Weeks after Surgery)

After 18 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.*



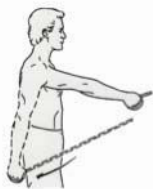
DO NOT DO FULL-CAN OR EMPTY-CAN EXERCISES! These place too much stress on the shoulder.

Resisted Exercises (18-22 Weeks after Surgery)

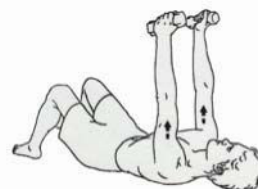
These exercises are for strengthening.

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.

Resisted Exercises (18-22 Weeks after Surgery)

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 22 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.