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Postoperative Rehabilitation Guidelines/Protocols
Small Rotator Cuff Repair

1-4 Weeks:

- Sling Immobilization
- Active ROM exercises to the Elbow, Wrist and Hand
- True Passive (ONLY) ROM Shoulder. NO ACTIVE MOTION.
 - Pendulums
 - Supine Elevation in Scapular plane = 140 degrees
 - External Rotation to tolerance with arm at side (emphasize ER, minimum goal 40°)
- Scapular Stabilization exercises (side lying)
- Deltoid isometrics in neutral (submaximal) as ROM improves
- No Pulley/Canes until 6 weeks post-op (these are active motions)

4-8 Weeks:

- Discontinue abduction pillow at **4 weeks** post-op
- Discontinue sling use at **5 weeks** post-op
- Begin Active Assist ROM and advance to Active as Tolerated
 - Elevation in scapular plane and external rotation as tolerated
 - No Internal rotation or behind back until 6 weeks post-op
- Begin Cuff Isometrics at 5 weeks post-op with arm at the side

8-12 Weeks:

- Active Assist to Active ROM Shoulder as Tolerated
 - Elevation in scapular plane and external rotation to tolerance
 - Begin internal rotation as tolerated
 - Light stretching at end ranges
- Cuff Isometrics with the arm at the side
- Upper Body Ergometer

3-12 Months:

- Advance to full ROM as tolerated with passive stretching at end ranges
- Advance strengthening as tolerated: isometrics □ bands □ light weights (1-5 lbs); 8-12 reps/2-3 sets per rotator cuff, deltoid, and scapular stabilizers
- Only do strengthening 3x/week to avoid rotator cuff tendonitis
- Begin eccentrically resisted motions, pylometrics (ex. Weighted ball toss), proprioception (es. body blade)
- Begin sports related rehab at 4 1/2 months, including advanced conditioning
- If throwing athlete
 - Return to throwing at 6 months
 - Throw from pitcher's mound at 9 months
- Collision sports at 9 months
- Maximal medical improvement usually at 12 months post-op