

POST-OPERATIVE REHABILITATION: AC JOINT RECONSTRUCTION

Therapy Plan: Twice per week for 0-3 months, once per week for 3-6 months

ROM Progression

Initial ROM weeks 0-6:

- Shoulder motion - pendulums and PASSIVE ONLY (NO ACTIVE MOTION)
- Elbow, wrist, hand motion as tolerated

Wean out of the sling over weeks 4-6 with the goal of being completely out of the sling at 6 weeks.

Progress passive and active ROM after 6 weeks as tolerated with the goal of full motion at 10-12 weeks.

Weight Bearing Progression

No strengthening for postoperative weeks 0-12 with progressive strengthening after week 12.

Initial Post-Operative Physical Therapy Visit (2 weeks)

- Instruct on ROM exercises (PASSIVE SHOULDER ONLY)
- Gentle passive motion, manual therapy
- Isometric exercises for core, deltoid

Phase 1 Physical Therapy (2-6 weeks): protect the joint, progress motion

- NO open-chain exercises
- Manual therapy 20+ minutes per session
- Gentle ROM as tolerated as above
- Soft tissue mobilization, isometric exercises, core strengthening

Phase 2 Physical Therapy (6-12 weeks): progressive motion

- Progress to full active ROM as tolerated as above
- Proprioceptive training
- Soft tissue mobilization, isometric exercises, core strengthening

Phase 3 Physical Therapy (12-24 weeks): progressive strengthening

- Progress to full ROM if not already obtained
- Initiate closed-chain and core strengthening
- Continue proprioceptive training
- Focus on functional exercises in all planes, advance only when fully controlled

Phase 4 Physical Therapy (24+ weeks): return to pre-injury level and sport

- Advance closed-chain and core strengthening
- Sport-specific drills as tolerated
- Full return may take a full 6-12 months or more depending on surgery and recovery