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Shoulder Replacement Surgery

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Post-Operative Rehabilitation Guidelines for
Small Rotator Cuff Tears

0-4 Weeks:

- Sling Immobilization
- Active ROM Elbow, Wrist and Hand (no resistive elbow flexion with biceps tenodesis for 8 weeks)
- 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 (sidelying)
- Deltoid isometrics in neutral (submaximal) as ROM improves
- No Pulley /Canes until 5 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 6wks .
- Begin Cuff Isometrics at 5 wks 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, plyometrics (ex. Weighted ball toss), proprioception (es. body blade)
- Begin sports related rehab at 4 ½ months, including advanced conditioning
- Return to throwing at 6 months (if applicable)
- Throw from pitcher's mound at 9 months (if applicable)
- Collision sports at 9 months (if applicable)