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Post-Operative Physical Therapy Protocol for Posterior Labral Repair

Immediate Postoperative Phase: Restrictive Motion

Goals:

- Protect the anatomic repair
- Prevent negative effects of immobilization
- Diminish pain and inflammation

Day 1-21:

- Sling for 4-6 weeks
- Elbow/hand ROM exercises 4-6 times per day
- Codman's pendulum exercises 4 times per day
- Do not exceed 90° of abduction or 30° of external rotation
- Hand gripping exercises 4-6 times per day
- Ice or cryotherapy: 20 minutes 4-6 times per day

Week 3-6:

- Gradually start ROM (as tolerated) - Do not push to quickly
- Flexion to 135-140° as tolerated (Start at lower degrees and increase as tolerated)
- Internal rotation to the abdomen only is allowed
- NO internal rotation behind the back is allowed for 6 weeks
- Initiate gentle exercise tubing ER/IR (arm at side)

Intermediate Phase: Moderate Protection Phase

Goals:

- Gradually restore full ROM (week 10)
- Preserve the integrity of the surgical repair
- Restore muscular strength and balance

Week 7-9:

- Gradually progress ROM
- Continue to progress isotonic strengthening program

Week 10 – 14:

May initiate slightly more strengthening exercises
Progress isotonic strengthening exercises
Continue all stretching exercises
~Progress ROM to functional demands

Phase III: Minimal Protection Phase

Goals:

Establish and maintain full ROM
Improve muscular strength, power and endurance
Gradually initiate functional activities

Criteria to enter Phase III:

- 1) Full non-painful ROM
- 2) Satisfactory stability
- 3) Muscular strength (good grade or better)
- 4) No pain or tenderness

Week 15-18:

Continue all stretching exercises (capsular stretches)
Continue strengthening exercises:
Endurance training
Initiate light plyometric program
Restricted sport activities (light swimming, half golf swings)

Week 18 – 21:

Continue all exercise listed above
Initiate interval sport program (throwing, etc)

Phase IV: Advanced Strengthening Phase and Return to Sports

Goals:

Enhance muscular strength, power and endurance
Progress functional activities
Maintain shoulder mobility

Criteria to enter Phase IV

- 1) Full non-painful ROM
- 2) Satisfactory static stability
- 3) Muscular strength 75-80% of contralateral side
- 4) No pain or tenderness

Week 20-24:

Continue flexibility exercises
Continue isotonic strengthening program
Plyometric strengthening
Progress interval sport programs and gradual return to sport activities

Return to non-contact sports at 4-5 months

Return to contact sports at 6 months