



Orthopaedic & Sports Medicine

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Arthroscopic Rotator Cuff Repair

MOON (Multicenter Orthopaedic Outcomes Network) Immediate (Red) Protocol

WEEKS 0 – 2: Period of protection → no therapy for the first 2 weeks

- **Sling with abduction pillow:** Must wear at all times except for hygiene
- **Range of Motion:** No shoulder ROM allowed; elbow/forearm/wrist/hand motion ONLY
- **Exercises:** pendulums and grip strengthening; NO shoulder strengthening or motion exercises permitted

THERAPY Phase I (Weeks 2 – 4 after surgery)

- **Sling with abduction pillow:** Continue
- **Range of Motion:** PROM only, including FF, ER, and ABD (within a comfortable range); No AROM/AAROM
- **Exercises:** continue pendulums; begin scapular exercises (while in sling) including elevation with shrugs, depression, retraction, and protraction
- **Modalities:** Per therapist, including electrical stimulation, ultrasound, heat (before), ice (after)

THERAPY Phase II (Weeks 4 – 8 after surgery)

- **Sling with abduction pillow:** Discontinue at 6 weeks
- **Range of Motion:** Progress PROM and begin AAROM → progress slowly
 - Week 4-5: perform while supine
 - Week 5-6: perform while back is propped up 45°
 - Week 6+: perform while in an upright position
- **Therapeutic Exercises:** Progress Phase I exercises; no shoulder strengthening yet
- **Modalities:** Per therapist, including electrical stimulation, ultrasound, heat (before), ice (after)

THERAPY Phase III (Weeks 8 – 12 after surgery)

- **Range of Motion:** Begin to AROM in all planes → progress slowly
- **Therapeutic Exercises:** Begin isometric exercises (use pillow or folded towel without moving the shoulder); no resistance exercises until 12 weeks after surgery
- **Modalities:** Per therapist, including electrical stimulation, ultrasound, heat (before), ice (after)

THERAPY Phase IV (Weeks 12 – 16 after surgery)

- **Range of Motion:** Progress to full, painless, AROM
- **Therapeutic Exercises:** Progress Phase III exercises, begin gentle resistance exercises with elastic band or hand weights, including resisted scapular strengthening, rotator cuff strengthening, and deltoid strengthening
 - Resistance exercises should be done 3 days/week, with rest between sessions
 - **Do not do full or empty-can exercises → these place too much stress on the rotator cuff**
- **Modalities:** Per therapist, including electrical stimulation, ultrasound, heat (before), ice (after)