

Physical Therapy Protocol
Shoulder Arthroplasty

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Prior to Operation (If possible):

Goals:

1. Learn elbow, hand, and wrist exercises
2. Understand sling/pillow
3. Understand limitations and post-operative expectations.

Phase 1: Day of Surgery – Day 7

- Goals:
 1. Control pain and swelling
 2. Elbow, hand, and wrist range of motion.
 3. Protect subscapularis repair
- Exercises:
 1. Active range of motion elbow, hand in sling
 2. Shoulder pendulum exercises

Phase 2: Weeks 2-4

- Goals:
 1. Protect subscapularis repair
 2. Maintain motion of elbow, hand, and wrist.
 3. Early limited motion of shoulder
- Exercises:
 1. Active range of motion elbow, hand, and wrist
 2. Pendulums out of sling
 3. Shoulder blade pinches in sling
 4. Shoulder shrugs in sling
 5. Supine passive forward elevation

6. Wall walks (active assist forward elevation in plane of scapula)

Phase 3: Week 5-12

- Goals:
 1. Regain full motion shoulder, elbow, hand, and wrist
- Exercises:
 1. Full active, passive, and active assist shoulder motion
 2. Active motion elbow, hand, wrist
 3. Scapular stabilization / scapular setting exercises
 4. Pool therapy for range of motion if available (no resistance exercises allowed, just motion).

****No strengthening exercises until week 12****

****No lifting, pushing, pulling, carrying over 5 pounds****

Phase 4: Beginning week 12:

- Goals:
 1. Normal shoulder motion
 2. Graduated progressive strengthening of rotator cuff (including subscapularis) and deltoid.

General guiding principles:

- The key component to a successful shoulder arthroplasty is protection of the subscapularis repair, all early therapy should be directed with this in mind.
- If there are any questions, please call my office. I am happy to discuss the progress of all my patients. Undoubtedly, when the patient, therapist, and surgeon are all on the same page...patients have greater success.

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