



REHABILITATION GUIDELINES

Edward S. Chang, MD
Orthopaedics and
Sports Medicine

ACROMIOCLAVICULAR (AC) JOINT RECONSTRUCTION

OFFICE LOCATIONS

TUESDAY
8100 Innovation Park
Drive
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WEDNESDAY
1005 N. Glebe Rd
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Arlington, VA 22201
T 571-414-6940
F 703-970-6465

THURSDAY
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6355 Walker Lane
Suite 300
Alexandria, VA 22310
T 703-797-6980
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CLINICAL NURSE

Eileen Perri, BSN
(703) 797-6918

The rehabilitation guidelines are presented in a criterion based progression program. General time frames are given for reference to the average, but individual patients will progress at different rates depending on their age, associated injuries, pre-injury health status, rehab compliance, tissue quality and injury severity. Specific time frames, restrictions and precautions may also be given to protect healing tissues and the surgical repair/reconstruction.

INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATIONS:

PHASE 1 (Weeks 0-6)

Goals

- Maintain integrity of repair-
- Diminish pain and inflammation
- Prevent muscular inhibition
- Independent with ADL's with modifications while maintaining the integrity of the repair

Sling

- Wear for 6 weeks (Including sleep)

Precautions

- No active range of motion (AROM) of Shoulder
- Avoid horizontal adduction
- Maintain arm in sling, remove only for exercise
- No lifting of objects
- No shoulder motion behind back
- No excessive stretching or sudden movements
- No supporting of body weight by hands
- Keep incision clean and dry



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Exercises

- PROM/AROM of elbow, wrist and hand
- Painless PROM in all planes with patient supine
 - Forward Flexion to 70 degrees in scapular plane
 - Abduction to 70 degrees in scapular plane
 - IR to tolerance
 - ER to tolerance
- Scapular isometric exercises

PHASE II (Week 6-12)

Goals:

- Gradual increase in ROM
- Improve Strength
- Decrease pain/inflammation
- Continue to avoid contact

Precautions:

- No lifting
- No supporting of body weight by hands and arms
- No excessive behind the back movements
- No sudden jerking motions

Exercises

- Painless ROM- Begin AAROM week 7 and AROM week 9.
- Glenohumeral extension is unrestricted after week 10
- Continue deltoid and rotator cuff isometric exercises

Criteria before Phase 3

- Minimal pain, near complete ROM

PHASE III (Week 12-16)

Goals:

- Normalize ROM
- Improve Strength
- Decrease pain/inflammation

Precautions:

- No lifting
- No supporting of body weight by hands and arms
- No excessive behind the back movements
- No sudden jerking motions



Exercises

- Begin GH and scapular resistance exercises
- Emphasis placed on strengthening of scapular stabilizers

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PHASE IV (Week 16-20)

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Goals:

- Improve Strength
- Maintain full AROM/PROM
- Return to full activities

Precautions:

- Weight lifting activities of triceps dips, wide grip bench press, military press, lat pull downs behind head
- Throwing program begins at 4-5 months

Exercises

- Continue previous exercises and progress isotonic strengthening
- Begin overhead strengthening
- Progressive UE weight lifting emphasizing deltoid, lats, and pec major with restrictions outlined. Lower weights with higher reps (15-20)
- Return to sport specific exercises at 5 months with clearance from MD