



**Edward S. Chang, MD**  
Orthopaedics and  
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**CLINICAL NURSE**

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**REHABILITATION GUIDELINES**

**ARTHROSCOPIC ANTERIOR-POSTERIOR SHOULDER  
STABILIZATION**

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:**

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**PHASE I (0-6 weeks)**

**Goals**

- Control inflammation and pain
- Use cryocuff 3-4 times per day

**Sling**

- Wear ER brace continuously (including sleep and showering) for 6 weeks

**Therapeutic Exercises**

- PROM/AROM of elbow and wrist only
- Ball squeezes
- PROM in scapular plane to 45 degrees only

## **PHASE II (6-8 weeks)**

### **Goals**

- Full, painless PROM in forward flexion and external rotation

### **Sling**

- The ER brace may be removed at 6 weeks
- Simple sling for comfort only

### **Therapeutic Exercises**

- PROM
  - Full passive forward flexion in the scapular plane
  - ER at side to 30 degrees maximum
  - Internal rotation to posterior belt line

## **PHASE III (8-12 weeks)**

### **Criteria**

- Full passive external rotation and forward flexion in scapular plane

### **Goals**

- Achieve full, painless PROM and AROM
- Begin gentle strengthening at 10 weeks

### **Therapeutic Exercise**

- AROM in all planes
- Maintain PROM in FF and ER
- Progress with passive IR to full
- Glenohumeral joint and scapular mobilization to regain full motion
- Gentle stretching to regain full motion
- May begin gentle strengthening at 10 weeks
  - Biceps curls
  - Triceps extensions
  - Lat pull-downs
  - Seated row
  - Shoulder shrug
  - No push-ups or bench press!!!

## **PHASE IV (12-16 weeks)**

### **Criteria**

- Full, painless PROM and AROM

### **Goals**

- Maintain full PROM and AROM
- Optimize neuromuscular control
- Progress with strengthening

### **Therapeutic Exercises**

- Continue strengthening as above
- Increase weight as tolerated
- ER/IR strengthening with sports band (Theraband)

## **PHASE V (4 months+)**

### **Criteria**

- Full, painless PROM and AROM in all planes

### **Goals**

- Maintain full PROM and AROM
- Progress with strengthening
- Return to sports at 5 months
- Begin weight lifting, avoiding stress to posterior capsule

### **Therapeutic Exercises**

- Continue with passive stretching as needed to maintain full PROM
- Progress with strengthening
- May begin incline bench pressing with wide grip (low weight, high repetitions)
- Avoid standard bench pressing and push-ups for at least 6 months post-op
- Return to Sports: May return to sports at 6 months when ROM is symmetric and painless and strength is 90% of contra-lateral side.