



REHABILITATION GUIDELINES

Edward S. Chang, MD
Orthopaedics and
Sports Medicine

SUBCAPULARIS TENDON REPAIR

OFFICE LOCATIONS

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8100 Innovation Park
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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 I (Weeks 1 – 4)

Sling immobilizer: At all times except exercises (including sleep)

ROM:

1. Home exercise program: distal range of motion with scapular retraction
2. Manual scapular manipulation with patient lying on non-operative side
3. Supine passive forward flexion in scapular plane to 100°
4. Supine passive external rotation to 0°

PHASE II (Weeks 4 – 6: Protective/Early Motion Phase)

Sling immobilizer: At all times except exercises; Discontinue after week 6

ROM:

1. PROM: Forward flexion in scapular plane - No limits
2. External rotation 20°
3. Internal rotation 30°

Therapeutic Exercises:

1. Codmans
2. Wand exercises

Strengthening:

1. Rotator cuff isometrics with arm in 0° abduction and neutral rotation
2. Scapular stabilization, no resistance
3. Abdominal and trunk exercises



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PHASE III (Weeks 7 – 12: Early Strengthening Phase)

ROM:

1. PROM/AAROM: forward flexion/IR/ER – Full
2. Go slow with external rotation
- 3.

Therapeutic Exercises:

1. Continue wand exercises for ER/IR/forward flexion
2. Flexibility, horizontal adduction (post capsule stretching)
- 3.

Strengthening:

1. Rotator cuff isotonic strengthening exercises
2. AROM: side-lying ER and supine forward flexion in scapular plane
3. Progress to standing forward flexion
4. External rotation/internal rotation at modified neutral with elastic bands
5. Progress to rhythmic stabilization exercises
6. Progress to closed chain exercises

PHASE IV (Weeks 12+: Late Strengthening Phase)

Strengthening:

1. Progress isotonic strengthening: periscapular and rotator cuff musculature
2. Lat pull downs
3. Row machine
4. Chest press

Additional Therapeutic Exercises:

1. Flexibility: side-lying post capsule stretch
2. Progress scapular stabilization program
3. Initiate isokinetic strengthening (IR/ER) in scapular plane
4. Begin light plyometrics at 16-18 weeks
5. Individualize program to meet demands of specific sport at 20-24 weeks
6. Initiate throwing program for overhead athletes at 20-24 weeks