

Orthopedic Associates of Hartford, P.C.

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Post-Operative Rehabilitation Protocol:

Acromioclavicular (AC) Joint Reconstruction

PHASE I: PROTECTIVE PHASE (WEEKS 0-2)

GOALS: Allow soft tissue healing, diminish pain/inflammation, establish motion, retard muscle atrophy

I. Immediate Post-Operative to Week 2:

A. General:

- * Sling snug and on at all times except exercise and hygiene
- * Cryotherapy unit or ice as directed

B. Weight Bearing:

- * Non-weight bearing

C. Range of Motion Goals:

- * Passive and AAROM
 - o Progress forward flexion to 140° as tolerated
 - o Progress abduction to 120° as tolerated
 - o ER/IR to full as tolerated (Begin at 0° abduction. Progress to 45° abduction, then 90° abduction)
- * ***NO*** horizontal abduction/adduction

D. Treatment / Exercises:

- * Begin pendulum
- * Active elbow and wrist range of motion, hand gripping
- * Scapular stabilization
- * Rope and Pulley (flexion)

PHASE II – INTERMEDIATE PHASE (WEEKS 2-8)

GOALS: Restore functional ROM, improve neuromuscular control, early strengthening.

Enter Phase II if:

- ✓ Minimal pain/tenderness
- ✓ Stable AC joint on clinical exam

II. Weeks 2-6:

A. General:

- * Sling snug and on at all times except exercise and hygiene
- * Cryotherapy unit or ice as directed

B. Weight Bearing:

- * Non-weight bearing

C. Range of Motion Goals:

- * Progress to full PROM, AAROM as tolerated
- * Initiate AROM

D. Treatment / Exercises:

- * Continue above treatment
- * Closed and open chain scapular stabilization
- * Light isometrics program – shoulder abduction, extension, ER/IR, Biceps/Triceps, periscapular muscles

III. Weeks 6-8:

A. General:

- * Discontinue shoulder orthosis or sling
- * Cryotherapy unit or ice 20 minutes/hour as needed

B. Weight Bearing:

- * Weight of arm

C. Range of Motion Goals:

- * Progress to full PROM, AAROM, AROM as tolerated

D. Treatment / Exercises:

- * Continue above treatment
- * Light isotonic resistance program
- * Initiate upper extremity endurance exercises
- * Rhythmic stabilization exercise for shoulder
- * ***NO shoulder press, bench press, pec deck or pullovers***

PHASE III: STRENGTHENING PHASE (WEEKS 8-16)

GOALS: Improve strength/endurance, Improve neuromuscular control.

Enter Phase III if:

- ✓ Full, painless ROM
- ✓ No pain/tenderness
- ✓ Strength 70% of uninvolved side

IV. Weeks 8-16:

A., B., C. As above

D. Treatment / Exercises:

- * Continue above treatment
- * Initiate tubing PNF patterns
- * Initiate ER/IR at 90° of abduction
- * Scapular strengthening – retractors, elevators
- * Progress isotonic resistance – abduction, ER/IR, flexion, Lats, Biceps/Triceps
- * Neuromuscular control glenohumeral and scapulothoracic joints
- * Rhythmic stabilization – flex/ex, ER/IR, Abd/Add, retract/protract, elevate/depress, PNF D2 patterns
- * Progress to light bench press and shoulder press

PHASE IV: RETURN TO ACTIVITY PHASE (MONTHS 4+)

GOALS: Improve strength/endurance, Gradual return to full activity.

Enter Phase IV if:

- ✓ Full, painless ROM
- ✓ No pain/tenderness
- ✓ Satisfactory isokinetic test (Flex/Ex, Abd/Add)
- ✓ Satisfactory clinical exam

V. Months 4+:

A., B., C. As above

D. Treatment / Exercises:

- * Continue above treatment
- * Progress resistance levels
- * Add plyometrics
- * Initiate Interval Sports Program
- * Resume normal training
- * Return to competition if:
 - ✓ Full ROM
 - ✓ No pain/tenderness

- ✓ Satisfactory strength (90% of uninvolved arm)
- ✓ Satisfactory clinical exam

* **Addendum**

This protocol provides general rehabilitation guidelines following Acromio-clavicular (AC) Joint Reconstruction. It is subject to modification depending on the degree of injury, the type and extent of associated surgical intervention, as well as your individual progress post-operatively. For any questions, please call my office at 860-244-1017.