

# REHABILITATION GUIDELINES AFTER ARTHROSCOPIC POSTERIOR SHOULDER STABILIZATION

---



*Shail Vyas, MD*  
*Orange County Orthopaedic Group*  
*(714) 974-0100*

*The intent of this protocol is to provide the therapist with guidelines of the post-operative rehabilitation course after an arthroscopic posterior shoulder stabilization procedure. It should not be a substitute for one's clinical decision making regarding the progression of a patient's post-operative course based on their physical exam findings, individual progress, and/or the presence of post-operative complications. The therapist should consult the referring physician with any questions or concerns.*

**FREQUENCY:** Weeks 0-4: 3x/week. Weeks 4-12: 2x/week. Weeks 12-16: 1x/week. Weeks 16-24: 1x/2 weeks.

## **INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

---

---

### **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
  - Full external rotation at the side and in abduction
  - 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 (16-24 weeks)**

##### ***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 5-6 months when ROM is symmetric and painless and strength is 90% of contra-lateral side.