

Rotator cuff rehabilitation protocol (small tear)

Rehabilitation after a rotator cuff tear can be a long and difficult journey. I have purposely kept this protocol simple and easy to read for both the patient and the physical therapist. In general, the goal is to regain full range of motion and strength without compromising healing of the rotator cuff. Rotator cuff rehab can take 6 to 12 months. Below, you'll find the precautions that should be used after rotator cuff surgery.

General precautions and goals:

- Sling is worn at all times for the 1st 2 weeks after surgery.
- No active range of motion until 10 weeks from surgery.
- Goal of full passive and active-assisted range of motion by 10 weeks from surgery.

Weeks 1-2:

- Sling is worn at all times.
- No range of motion to allow for wound healing.
- Follow-up in the clinic two weeks from surgery.

Weeks 2-10

- Discontinue sling
- Beginning physical therapy
 - Passive range of motion range and active assisted range of motion only
 - Goal full range motion by 10 weeks.

Weeks 10+

- Continue physical therapy
 - Begin active range of motion and strengthening once full range of motion has been achieved.
- The following timetable can be considered as a minimum for return to most activities:
 - Ski 6 months
 - Golf 4-6 months
 - Weight Training 6 months
 - Tennis 6 -8 months

- Swimming 6-8 months
- Throwing 6 months