



Physical Therapy Protocol – Total Shoulder Arthroplasty

Diagnosis: R / L Total Shoulder Arthroplasty

Date of Procedure: _____

Frequency: 2-3 Times Per Week for ____ weeks, starting 2 weeks following surgery

Weeks 0-2: NO THERAPY, healing, protection

- **Sling with pillow at all times except hygiene**
- **Pendulums, elbow/hand/wrist motion ONLY**

Weeks 2-6:

- **Sling with pillow at all times except hygiene until 6 weeks**
- **Range of motion:** PROM → AAROM → as tolerated, **except the following. . .**
 - o No active IR/backwards extension for 6 weeks. While lying supine, a small pillow or towel roll should be placed behind the elbow to avoid shoulder hyperextension / anterior capsule stretch / subscapularis stretch. (When lying supine patient should be instructed to always be able to visualize their elbow. This ensures they are not extending their shoulder past neutral.) – This should be maintained for 6-8 weeks post-surgically. The subscapularis tendon is taken down for the surgery and then repaired afterwards. It takes about 4-6 weeks for it to heal back into the humerus and regenerate a blood and nerve supply.
 - o PROM in biceps flexion for first 6 weeks
 - o ROM goals: Week 1: 120° FF/20° ER at side; ABD max 75° without rotation
 - o ROM goals: Week 2: 140° FF/40° ER at side; ABD max 75° without rotation
 - o **No resisted internal rotation/backward extension until 12 weeks post-op**
- **Exercises:**
 - o Pendulums, grip strengthening
 - o Canes/pulleys OK if advancing from PROM
 - o **No resisted internal rotation/backward extension**
- **Modalities:**
 - o Heat before PT, ice after PT

Weeks 6-12:

- **Sling:** ok to remove unless in crowded environment
- **Range of motion:** advance as tolerated, ok to begin IR and backward extension motion as tolerated
- **Exercises:** begin light resisted ER/FF/ABD isometrics and bands (concentric motions only)
 - **No scapular retraction with bands**
 - **No resisted internal rotation/backwards extension until 12 weeks post op**
- **Modalities:** per therapist, include E-stem, ultrasound, heat (before), ice (after)

Months 3-12:

Range of motion: continue to increase as tolerated with passive stretching to achieve end range of motion

Exercises: continue exercise from above and advance as tolerated for rotator cuff, deltoid, and scapular stabilization

- Begin resisted IR/BE (isometrics/bands): isometrics → light bands → weights
- Advance strengthening as tolerated; 10 reps/1 set per exercise for rotator cuff, deltoid, and scapular stabilizers.
- Begin eccentric motions, plyometrics, and closed chain exercises at 12 weeks.

Modalities: per therapist, include E-stem, ultrasound, heat (before), ice (after)