

POST-OPERATIVE REHABILITATION PROTOCOL

Anterior Shoulder Stabilization with Remplissage

William McLaughlin, MD | Sports Medicine Surgery | Advanced Bone & Joint

Phase 1 | 0-6 Weeks

GOALS FOR THIS PHASE

- Sling immobilization at all times except showering.
- Avoid all active or passive tension across the posterior shoulder.
- Maintain elbow/wrist/hand ROM and grip strength.
- If biceps tenodesis was performed: no active elbow flexion for 8 weeks.

Immobilization

- Sling immobilization at all times, except when showering.

Precautions

- No active or passive tension across the posterior shoulder.
- If biceps tenodesis was performed: no active elbow flexion for 8 weeks.

Therapeutic Exercises

- Grip strength.
- Elbow/wrist/hand ROM.
- Grip strengthening.

Phase 2 | 7-12 Weeks

GOALS FOR THIS PHASE

- Discontinue sling immobilization.
- Advance to AAROM and AROM (FF limit 140° at 8 weeks then progress to full; ER at side 40°).
- Begin prone extensions and scapular stabilizing exercises.
- Avoid passive tension on posterior capsule (no cross-body or sleeper stretch).
- No pushing motions, no theraband or isometrics for ER strengthening.

Immobilization

- Discontinue sling immobilization.

Precautions

- No cross-body or sleeper stretch — avoid passive tension on the posterior capsule.
- No pushing motions.
- No theraband or isometrics for ER (no active ER strengthening).
- If biceps tenodesis was performed: no active elbow flexion for 8 weeks.

Range of Motion

- Advance to AAROM and AROM — limit FF to 140° at 8 weeks, then slowly progress to full as tolerated.
- ER at side to 40°.

Strengthening

- Begin prone extensions and scapular stabilizing exercises (traps / rhomboids / levator scapulae).
- Gentle joint mobilization.

Modalities

- Modalities per PT discretion.

Phase 3 | 3-6 Months

GOALS FOR THIS PHASE

- Begin gentle progression of cross-body adduction and sleeper stretch.
- Initiate ER and scapular retraction resistive training at neutral (week 14), progressing to elevated positions.
- Advance to full, painless ROM with gentle end-range stretching.
- Progress deltoid/cuff to isotonic — all strengthening below horizontal.
- Initiate upper-extremity ergometer.

Range of Motion

- Begin gentle and slow progression of cross-body adduction and sleeper stretch.
- Advance to full, painless ROM. Gentle stretching at end ROM.
- Full AROM all directions below horizontal with light resistance.

Strengthening

- May initiate ER and scapular retraction resistive training at neutral beginning at 14 weeks; progress to positions of elevation with theraband and/or progressive light weights (1-5 lbs).
- Deltoid/cuff progress to isotonic.
- 8-12 reps / 2-3 sets for rotator cuff, deltoid, and scapular stabilizers.
- All strengthening exercises below horizontal.
- Continue and progress with Phase 2 exercises.

Conditioning

- Begin upper-extremity ergometer.

Phase 4 | 6+ Months

GOALS FOR THIS PHASE

- Achieve full ROM without discomfort.
- Advance Phase 3 strengthening (3x/week).
- Sport/work-specific rehabilitation.
- Return to throwing at 4.5 months.
- Return to sports at 6-8 months once MD-approved.

Range of Motion

- Full ROM without discomfort.

Advanced Progression

- Advance exercises in Phase 3 (strengthening 3x/week).
- Sport/work-specific rehabilitation.

Return to Sport

- Return to throwing at 4.5 months.
- Return to sports at 6-8 months once MD-approved.

This protocol is a general guideline. Progression is patient-specific and at the discretion of William McLaughlin, MD.