

# The Sports Medicine Specialists

RSH Physical Therapy  
1601 Main Street # 602  
Richmond, TX 77469  
281.341.2874

Houston Orthopædics & Sports Medicine  
1601 Main Street # 601  
Richmond, TX 77469  
281.565.8800

OakBend Medical Center  
1705 Jackson Street  
Richmond, TX 77469  
281.341.3000



**David Edell, LAT, ATC, CSCS**

Cellular: 713.858.3802 • Fax: 281.341.3012 • E-Mail: [dedell@athleticadvisor.com](mailto:dedell@athleticadvisor.com)

## Moderate Rotator Cuff Repair Rehabilitation Protocol

### **Post-Op: Day 1 - 10**

1. Arm in sling - out for exercises only.
2. Do not allow wounds to get wet while bathing or showering.
3. Ice before and after exercise sessions and as often as possible throughout the day.
4. Active Exercises, performed 2 - 3 times daily:
  - a. Codman's Pendulum Swings,
  - b. Gripping Exercises,
  - c. Wrist Flexion/Extension, and
  - d. Elbow Flexion Exercises.
5. Passive Exercises: use involved hand to lift involved arm through a pain-free range of motion, performed 2 - 3 times per day.
  - a. Bent-Arm Flexion,
  - b. Bent-Arm Abduction,
  - c. Bent-Arm Extension,
  - d. Seated Internal/External Rotation with arm adducted and elbow flexed to 90°.
6. Physician examination at 7 - 10 days post-op.

### **Post-Op: Day 10 - Week 4**

1. Sling off except when in crowds, you become fatigued, or in stressful situations.
2. May shower when sutures have been removed and wounds have sealed.
3. Continue to ice before and after exercise sessions, and during the day as needed.
4. Continue previous Active Exercises and add:
  - a. Supine Triceps Extensions (no weight),
  - b. Shoulder Shrugs, and
  - c. Isometric Towel Squeezes.
5. Progress Passive Exercises to Active-Assisted Exercises using a T-Bar or Pulley apparatus. Performed 3 - 4 times daily.
  - a. Straight-Arm Flexion,
  - b. Straight-Arm Abduction,
  - c. Straight-Arm Extension, and
  - e. Wall Ladder Climbs for Shoulder Flexion and Abduction.

**Post-Op: Week 4 - 8**

1. Continue Sling Use in crowds or stressful situations.
2. Ice before and after exercise sessions.
3. Continue previous Active-Assisted exercises 4 - 5 times weekly, and add:
  - a. Supine Triceps Extensions with light weight,
  - b. Upper Body ergometer as tolerated with low resistance and low RPM.
4. Progress Active-Assisted Exercises to Active Exercises, as tolerated, 3 - 4 times weekly and add:
  - a. Supine Internal/External Rotations with arm adducted and elbow flexed to 90°.
5. Full Active-Assisted Range of Motion is expected by 6 weeks post-op.
6. Physician examination at week 6.

**Post-Op: Week 8 - 12**

1. Stretch before and after exercise as tolerated:
  - a. Horizontal Adduction Stretch,
  - b. Triceps/Inferior Cuff Stretch,
  - c. Internal Rotation with shoulder abducted and elbow bent to 90°, and
  - d. External Rotation with shoulder abducted and elbow bent to 90°.
2. Continue previous Active Exercises and add:
  - a. Progress towel squeezes to shoulder adduction using sport cord,
  - b. Bent-Over Rows,
  - c. Prone Horizontal Abduction,
  - d. Prone Extension with forearm internally rotated,
  - e. Supine dumbbell press with no weight, and
  - f. Supine Internal/External Rotation with arm abducted and elbow flexed to 90°.

**Post-Op: Week 12 - 16**

1. Continue previous stretching exercises before and after exercise as part of a general warm-up and cool-down.
2. Full Active ROM is expected at end of Week 16.
3. Active exercises as tolerated (Low Weight, High Repetitions)
  - a. Biceps Curls,
  - b. Triceps Extensions,
  - c. Supraspinatus (Empty Can),
  - d. Bench Press,
  - e. Progressive Push-ups,
  - f. Bent-Over Rows,
  - g. Lat. Pulldowns, and
  - h. Supine Internal/External Rotation with arm abducted and elbow flexed to 90°.
4. Progress to normal athletic activities by 4 to 6 post-op with physician clearance.

Patients heal at different rates, possess various pre-operative deficiencies, and require specific attributes to perform normal function. Due to these factors, this protocol must be individualized to each patient to allow for optimal return to desired activities.