

The GLSM Superior Capsular Reconstruction Rehabilitation Program is an evidence-based and soft tissue healing dependent program which allows patients to progress to vocational and sports-related activities as quickly and safely as possible.

Contact us at 1-800-362-9567 ext. 58600 if you have questions.

Pre-Op	Pre-op overall stiffness can be correlated to post-op stiffness. The best predictor of post-op stiffness at 6 wks is decreased pre-op IR vertebral level ROM
	Pre-op exercises should be on increasing or maintaining overall ROM and muscle activation. Emphasis on improving behind the back horizontal adduction and IR.
Factors Influencing Post-op	
Rehabilitation	Location of tear and number of tendons involved Amount of tendon retraction Tissue degeneration/fatty infiltrate Pre-op stiffness
	Tissue quality: is affected by age, smoking, diabetes, chronicity of tear Surgeon preference Tissue healing: Soft tissue-to-bone healing is a slow and gradual process that requires at
	least 12 wks of healing to allow adequate pull-out strength of the repair
	General Program Outline
	ROM: Emphasis on PROM initially. Add AAROM supine ER at wk 4. Add AAROM elevation at wk 6. Add AROM elevation at wk 8 with emphasis on avoiding shoulder shrug. Goal of full ROM 12-16 wks.
	Muscle Activation : Important to prevent reflex disassociation, maintain muscle tone, and prevent muscle atrophy. Initiate with sub-max pain-free isometrics and AROM as outlined in the protocol.
	Strengthening: No aggressive strengthening for 12 wks. Goal of 75-80% strength by 5-6 months. Patients should continue with strength training at least 1 year post-op to maximize outcome.
	Updated: 10/2017

st-op maximum protec	tion phase)	
 Protect anatomic repair Prevent negative effects of immobilization Gently begin PROM per tolerance except for IR Adequate pain control 		
AROM for cervical spine, elbow, wrist, handGripping activities without lifting		
 24 hours/day for 6-8 weeks. D/C based on MD approval Remove sling for bathing/dressing and exercises as outlined by PT Try to keep arm relaxed in sling and avoid protective posture to decrease muscle tension in cervical region 		
 Keep arm supported when in and out of sling. When laying supine, prop elbow on pillow to keep in line with the shoulder. No behind the back movements (avoid combined ext/add/IR). Try to keep elbow in line with shoulder. Avoid sudden movements or supporting body weight through the hand or elbow. No lifting or carrying of objects on injured side. Avoid pushing or pulling objects to minimize compression/shear to the shoulder 		
 Initial emphasis on PROM per tolerance except for IR and ext. No AAROM for shid elevation No shid AROM or resisted motion 		
 Ice 15 minutes 3-5x/day, more often as needed for pain control IFC for pain management/inflammation control 		
 Remove sling 3x per day for passive pendulum, AROM elbow / wrist / hand, gripping Passive pendulum with trunk rotation or opposite extremity Postural education to avoid forward head / rounded shoulders Cervical AROM: retraction in supine/seated/standing, flexion, side bending, rotation Overpressure and stretching for cervical side bending Thoracic AROM mid-range extension seated or standing Thoracic P-A self-mobilization in seated 		
Active scapular retraction with depression Add in supine AAROM ER in scapular plane		
 Add in subme AAROM ER in scapular plane Initiate PROM and passive pendulum at 1 wk post-op. Gradually progress based or tolerance except for IR and extension which needs to be progressed cautiously. Sta all motions, including ER, in scapular plane to minimize strain to supraspinatus At wk 4 progress working on ER from scaption to 60 deg of abd; add gentle IR ROM in scaption. No aggressive stretching. 		
	eve /not exceed	
0-2 wks	ks	4-6 wks
ion Per tolerance 0-45 deg	olerance (at least 0-90	Per tolerance (0-110)0-75 deg
0-45 deg	deg deg	0-40 deg
oular To chest	est	0-20 deg
ABD None None None	e at wk 3. 0-20 deg	0-40 deg None None
Neutral	al	Neutral
praspinatus activity supine / standing ER in	plane. Contraindicat	ted for IR
5	ndicated on land for flexion / sca upraspinatus activity supine / standing ER in scapular	ndicated on land for flexion / scaption / abduction until

Phase I: 0-6 weeks	Immediate post-op maximum protected motion phase		
AROM	None		
Treatment Interventions	 Warm up: Passive Pendulum or Hot pack Emphasis on GH passive range of motion as outlined above. AAROM ER in scapular plane at wk 4. Gentle IR PROM in scaption at wk 4. No AROM GH Mobilizations (in scapular plane) grade I/II for pain or muscle spasm Thoracic spine P-A mobilizations as needed. 0-2 wks: seated. 2-4wks:Progress to prone as tolerated Postural education: Avoid forward head/rounded shoulders Active scapular retraction, scapular depression in neutral position Scapular PROM in sidelying (if needed). Manual resisted scapular isometrics AROM elbow, wrist, hand. Gripping activities without lifting 		
	 Cryotherapy. IFC if indicated 		

	Superior Capsular Reconstruction		
Phase II: 6-8 weeks	Intermediate moderate protection phase		
Goals Sling	 Protect anatomic repair Adequate pain control Gently progress PROM per tolerance, Implement AAROM for shoulder elevation Utilize aquatic to assist with ROM D/C per MD approval 		
Precautions	 No shoulder AROM for lifting. Avoid prolonged unsupported arm positioning. Avoid sudden movement or supporting body weight through the hand or elbow. No behind the back movements (avoid combined ext/add/IR). Try to keep elbow in line with shoulder both in standing and supine. No lifting or carrying of objects on injured side. Avoid pushing or pulling objects to minimize compression/shear to the shoulder No resisted movement. 		
Recommendations	 Patient can perform ADL's below shoulder height Treatment emphasis on restoring PROM /AAROM based on guidelines provided Add low load long duration stretching (wk 7) if needed Aquatic physical therapy Facilitate thoracic extension 		
HEP to initiate at wk 6-7	 Continue previous program as needed. AAROM flexion / scaption to tolerance. AAROM abduction 0-90 deg only Isometric elbow flexion / extension 		
Modalities	 Ice 15 minutes 3-5x/day, more often as needed for pain control IFC for pain management/inflammation control 		
Aquatics	Emphasis on ROM with water at shld height		
PROM / AAROM	 Continue with PROM with goal of full PROM by wk 12. Progress PROM ER at 90/90. Progress to gentle PROM IR at 90/90 at wk 7. Add gentle PROM ext at wk 7. Add AAROM for shid elevation with goal of full AAROM by wk12-14. Goals to achieve /not exceed 6-8 wks Flexion / scaption Per tolerance (0-130) Abduction 0-90 deg ER in scapular plane 0-60 deg IR (GH) in scapular plane 0-50 deg ER at 90 ABD 0-20 deg 		
AROM	 Contraindicated for flexion, scaption, abduction. IR / ER with arm in scapular plane through pain-free ROM 		
Treatment Interventions	 IR / ER with arm in scapular plane through pain-free ROM Warm up: Passive Pendulum or Hot pack or AAROM on Nustep Low-load long duration end-range stretch at wk 7 (if necessary) using wand and hot pack in supine for ER GH Mobilizations grade I/II for pain, III/IV to increase joint mobility Thoracic spine P-A mobilizations Facilitate Thoracic extension: stretch in sitting with/without overpressure (ball / towel roll/ foam roller behind back) PROM with end range stretching as outlined above AAROM as outlined above: Pulleys, wand exercises, ball rolling on table Aquatics Postural education: Avoid forward head/rounded shoulders Active scapular protraction, retraction to neutral, scapular depression Scapular manual RROM in sidelying AROM elbow, wrist, hand Cryotherapy. IFC if indicated 		

	Superior Capsular	Reconstruction		
Phase III: 8-12 wks	Minimal protection phase with emphasis on normalizing ROM			
Goals	 Preserve the integrity of the surgical repair Implement AROM for shoulder elevation avoiding shoulder shrug Restore normal ROM with normal movement patterns Decrease pain and inflammation Initiate sub-max and pain-free muscle activation exercises 			
Precautions	 Patient can perform ADL's up to shoulder height. Limit overhead activities. Avoid making sudden movements and lifting heavy objects. No aggressive strengthening activities. Avoid pushing or pulling heavy objects. 			
Recommendations	 Treatment emphasis on restoring PROM / AAROM / AROM Add AROM exercises avoiding compensatory shoulder shrug. Encourage normal movement patterns Add sub-max pain-free shoulder isometrics (GH, RTC) Add sub-max rhythmic stabilizations to encourage co-contraction Continue with thoracic extension exercises Continue with aquatics up to wk 10-12 			
Modalities	 Ice 15 minutes 1-3x/day, more often as needed for pain control IFC for pain management/inflammation control 			
Aquatics	 Continue until wk 10-12. Work on increasing ROM with emphasis on normal movement patterns. 			
PROM / AAROM / AROM	 Goal is functional ROM in all planes with normal movement patterns by 12-16 wks Add gentle AAROM ext wk 8. Add in gentle IR stretch behind the back vertebral level at wk 10 			
	G	oals to achieve /not e 8-10 wks	10-12 wks	_
	Flexion / scaption	Unlimited (0-150)	Unlimited (0-170)	-
		· · · · ·		_
	Abduction ER in scapular	0-120 deg 0-70	0-150 deg	_
	plane	0-70	0-80 deg	
	IR (GH) in scapular plane	0-60 deg	0-70 deg	
	ER at 90 ABD	0-60 deg	0-70 deg	
	IR (GH) at 90 ABD	0-45 deg	0-60 deg	_
	Extension	0-40 deg	0-55 deg	
Muscle Activation Strengthening	 No aggressive strengthening activities Add in sub-max pain-free shld isometrics for muscle activation. Muscle activation is important to minimize rotator cuff inhibition, maintain muscle tone, and minimize muscle atrophy. Strengthening will be with the weight of the arm focusing on quality movement and endurance (ie: initially 2-3 sets of 10 progressing to 2-3 sets of 30 reps of full flexion, scaption, abduction, ER. 1x/day, 5 -7 days per week per tolerance). When progressing to shld isotonics in the next phase, the patient must be able to elevate arm without shoulder or scapular hiking. If unable, will need to continue with dynamic rhythmic stabilization GH joint exercises. 			
		pported bicep / triceps	isotonic strengthening w	vk 8, progress to

	Superior Capsular Reconstruction
Phase III: 8-12 wks	Minimal protection phase with emphasis on normalizing ROM
Treatment Interventions	 Active warm-up: Codman's, UBE with no resistance (add light resistance at wk 9) Low load long duration end-range stretch (if necessary) using wand and hot pack in supine for ER. Utilize for other movements as necessary. GH Mobilizations PROM with end range stretch Therapeutic exercises: AAROM: Pulleys, wand. Add in extension past neutral wk 7, Add in gentle IR behind the back stretch wk 10
	 AROM: GH: All motions with emphasis on quality movement. Focus on endurance working up to 30 repetitions Scapula: (light resistance of <5 lbs with emphasis on endurance) protraction, retraction (seated progress to prone), rows to neutral, depression *** 4 keys exercises to maximize mid/lower trapezius and inhibit upper trapezius sidelye ER sidelye flexion prone horizontal abduction with ER prone extension Muscle activation: Sub-max pain-free GH isometrics Supported Biceps / Triceps isotonics, progress to unsupported wk 10 Rhythmic stabilization sub-max (to facilitate muscle activation / co-contraction): Wk 8: supine arm supported ER/IR wk 10-12: supine flexion 90 deg, low load CKC (<bw) ball="" ie:="" li="" on="" patient="" standing<="" table="" with=""> Encourage thoracic extension </bw)>
	 Ice (in stretch if needed) 15 minutes E Stim (IFC or NMES) if necessary
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	Superior Capsular Reconstruction		
Phase IV: 12+ wks	Regain Functional ROM / Strengthening and Conditioning Phase		
Goals	 Establish and maintain functional ROM, mobility, and stability Progress muscular strength, power, and endurance Initiate higher level activates depending on functional demands and MD approval 		
Precautions	 Patient must be able to elevate arm without shoulder or scapular hiking. If unable, need to continue with dynamic rhythmic stabilization GH exercises. Patients should continue to perform strengthening exercises for up to 1 year post-op to maximize outcome. 		
Recommendations	 Facilitate regaining functional ROM Emphasize regaining strength and endurance with proper movement patterns Continue with proprioceptive / kinesthetic exercises Progress to independent strengthening at wk 20-24 Assess posterior capsule for tightness 		
Modalities	Ice 1x/ day and /or after strenuous activities		
ROM	 No restrictions. Goal is functional ROM in all planes with normal movement patterns by 12-16 wks 		
	Goals to achie		
		12-16 wks	
	Flexion / scaption	Unlimited (0-170/180)	
	Abduction	0-170/180 deg 0-80/90 deg	
	ER in scapular plane IR (GH) in scapular plane	<u> </u>	
	ER at 90 ABD	0-70 deg 0-80/90 deg	
	IR (GH) at 90 ABD	0-70 deg	
	Extension	0-70 deg	
Strengthening	 Target scapulothoracic, rotator cuff, glenohumeral, and total arm strengthening and endurance Progress to unilateral scapulothoracic strengthening Strengthening initially with uni-planar movements progressing to multi-planar movements Wk 20: Isokinetic ER/IR power test at 90, 180 deg/sec Wk 20: Progress to overhead strengthening (if needed) if adequate strength scores: MMT 4/5, Isokinetic ER/IR of 75% at 90 and180 deg/sec; ER/IR ratio of 2/3 Isometric strength test (5 sec hold) for shld flexion and scaption of 75% compared to opp extremity. (Measure with hand-held dynamometer. Perform 3 reps and calculate the average) 		

	Superior Capsular Reconstruction	
Phase IV: 12+ wks	Regain Functional ROM / Strengthening and Conditioning Phase	
Treatment Interventions: (Examples of exercises but not an all-inclusive list)	 Regain Functional ROM / Strengthening and Conditioning Phase Active warm-up: UBE, rower Continue with ROM activities as necessary Scapulothoracic strengthening: chest press (+), rows in full ROM, press down, scaption prone horizontal abduction in neutral rotation, prone extension with ER, prone horizontal abduction with ER, prone full can, dynamic hug, serratus punch 120 deg, lat pull downs (wk 18) Glenohumeral / rotator cuff strengthening: flexion, scaption, prone horizontal adduction with ER, press down sidelying ER, isotonic IR/ER in scapular plane progress to 90/90 at wk 18 if needed, isokinetic IR/ER in scapular plane progress to 90/90 wk 20 if needed Total arm strengthening: Triceps extensions, biceps curls PNF patterns at wk 16 Proprioceptive/Kinesthesia activities: rhythmic stabilization: supine flexion 120 deg standing flexion 90 deg bilateral progress to unilateral body blade CKC exercises: sub-max BW: quadruped (euroglide / cuff link), wall push-ups Progress to full BW (wk 18): partial prone walk-outs, full prone walk-outs Plyometrics: bilateral progress to unilateral Cryotherapy, electrical stimulation, and biofeedback, and if necessary 	
Isokinetic IR/ER testing	 Wk 20 (5 months), wk 28 (7 months) and 12 months at 30/30/30 position or 90/90 (if appropriate) 	
Return to work/sport	 Based on MD approval, full ROM, minimal pain at rest or with activity, isokinetic power at 90%, isometric hand-held dynamometer testing 90% and/or MMT 5/5, and functional testing at 90% compared to uninvolved side 6-8 months: Return to interval throwing program per MD approval 	

