

Adam Seidl, MD
Assistant Professor
Shoulder/Elbow Surgery
Department of Orthopedics
University of Colorado



Orthopedics
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

Highlands Ranch Hospital
(720) 516-4090
Inverness
(303) 694-3333
Anschutz Medical Campus
(720) 848-1900

Rehabilitation Protocol Shoulder Arthroplasty

Phase 1: Hospital to 1st Follow up - Protect Subscapularis (0 to 2 weeks)

- Patients may shower immediately over clear plastic, waterproof dressing
- Waterproof (tegaderm) dressing will be removed by surgeon at 1st post-op visit
- Sutures are all underneath the skin and will dissolve on their own
- **Sling should be worn at all times** with the exception of showering and while performing shoulder exercises
- While lying supine, the distal humerus/elbow should be supported by a pillow or towel roll to avoid shoulder extension
- Therapist should teach the following in hospital on POD1 to be performed 3 times per day starting immediately:
 - Elbow, forearm, and hand AROM
 - Supine passive ROM – flexion to 130, ER to 20 – See Handout
Supine exercises should be performed with a small towel placed behind the elbow to avoid shoulder hyperextension and anterior capsular stretch
 - Emphasize home program

Phase 2: Protect the Subscapularis (2 to 6 weeks)

- Sling should be worn at night and when out of house. May remove the sling during the day with the following restrictions:
 - Limit ER to 20
 - No resisted IR
 - Avoid extension of shoulder
 - Avoid reaching behind the back
 - Do not lift anything greater than 2 to 3 lbs with the involved hand
 - While lying supine, the distal humerus/elbow should be supported by a pillow or towel roll to avoid shoulder extension
- Continue Phase 1 exercises with the addition of:
 - Pendulums
 - AAROM - Pulleys into scapular plane elevation to 130, ER to 20
 - Supine AAROM into flexion and ER with above limits
 - Emphasize home program

Adam Seidl, MD
Assistant Professor
Shoulder/Elbow Surgery
Department of Orthopedics
University of Colorado



Orthopedics
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

Highlands Ranch Hospital
(720) 516-4090
Inverness
(303) 694-3333
Anschutz Medical Campus
(720) 848-1900

Phase 3: *(6 weeks -10 weeks)*

- Discontinue sling use
- Lifting restriction of 10 pounds remains
- Advance AROM and PROM as tolerated
 Maintain ER limit of 30 until 10 weeks.
 Advance elevation as tolerated
- Scapular stabilizer strengthening.
- Strengthen rotator cuff and shoulder musculature (Isometrics, Theraband, dumbbell, etc). **AVOID RESISTED IR OR EXTENSION UNTIL 10 WEEKS.**

Phase 4: *(>10 weeks)*

- Advance shoulder ER range of motion as tolerated (Light stretching only).
- May initiate subscapularis strengthening (resisted IR and extension).
- Advance shoulder and rotator cuff strengthening as tolerated.
- Incorporate low level functional activities at 3 months (swimming, water aerobics, light tennis, jogging)
- Start higher-level activities at 4 months (tennis, light weight training, and golf).
- Initiate functional progression to sports specific activities at 4 months.