

Acromioclavicular Joint Reconstruction Rehab Protocol

Post-op visits:

- 2w, 6w, 12w, 6m

Xrays:

- Will be done at each visit

Physical therapy:

- Therapy prescription will be provided at your 2-week appointment (may start earlier if patient requested).

Home exercise program (HEP):

- These are a guide for you and the physical therapist; physical therapist may add on exercises as necessary for rehabilitation

Restrictions:

- Sling:
 - Full-time 2 weeks and then 4 more weeks only when sleeping or in public
- Motion restrictions:
 - Avoid reaching your hand up your back
 - Do not push yourself out of a chair or bed with your operative arm until 12 weeks after surgery
- Strengthening and weightlifting:
 - **No strengthening operative arm until 12 weeks after surgery**
 - Weightlifting restrictions: avoid bench press, Olympic lifts, and overhead press until 6 months post-op

Weeks 0-2: Acute Recovery After Surgery

Sling	• Sling at all times except during hygiene and home exercises
Weight Restrictions	• < 1 lb (phone, toothbrush, etc) • No strengthening
Range of Motion	• No shoulder motion except as needed during exercises
Exercises	• Phase I Home Exercise Program
Misc	• Do not submerge incision for 4 weeks after surgery • Ice 3-4x/day with ice packs on towel over shoulder or ice machine

Weeks 2-6: Passive and Active-Assist Motion with limits

Sling	• Sling while sleeping or out in public spaces
Weight Restrictions	• < 1 lb (phone, toothbrush, etc) ○ May begin using arm for daily activities in front of body (i.e. computer/desk work) • No strengthening
Range of Motion	• Start passive and active-assist range of motion ○ Flexion: < 120 deg (hand to about head height) ○ Abduction (away from body): none

	○ External rotation: < 30 degrees ○ Internal rotation: to stomach – only in front of body (not behind back) ○ Helpful guide: pretend your arm is against a wall – do not do any motion away from your body that would go into the wall (abduction or external rotation)
Exercises	● Phase II Home Exercise Program – Scapular stabilization
Misc	● Do not submerge incision for 4 weeks after surgery ● Ice 3-4x/day with ice packs on towel over shoulder or ice machine

Weeks 6-12: Advance motion and start active motion

Sling	● Out of sling completely
Weight Restrictions	● < 1 lb (phone, toothbrush, etc) ● No strengthening (may start isometric exercises)
Range of Motion	● Start active motion ○ No limits on forward flexion, internal rotation, external rotation, extension, or abduction ○ May start internal rotation behind the back and across body stretches gently
Exercises	● Phase III Home Exercise Program – Scapular stabilization + isometric exercises
Misc	● Heat before exercises ● Ice after exercises

Months 3 – 4.5: Full Motion and strengthening

Sling	● None
Weight Restrictions	● Progress up to 25 lbs of lifting ● May start strengthening of the shoulder (periscapular, rotator cuff, deltoid, etc)
Range of Motion	● Continue to work on motion if not fully achieved yet
Exercises	● Phase IV Home Exercise Program – Scapular and shoulder strengthening
Misc	● Heat before exercises ● Ice after exercises

Months 4.5 - 6+: Return to sport or activity

- No weight limit: progressive strengthening to tolerance
- Begin sports specific rehab with higher progressive weight training without limit
- Return to sport criteria:
 - Full, painless range of motion without apprehension
 - Similar shoulder strength to contralateral
 - Completed sport specific rehabilitation

General return to sport: ~5-6m

*** Adjustments to this protocol may be made based on patient progress at post-operative visits.