



**OrthoNC.com**

ORTHOPAEDIC SPECIALISTS OF NC

## **CERVICAL FUSION POST-SURGICAL REHABILITATION PROTOCOL**

---

- C-collar – Per surgeon, wear at night for comfort Sit in chair for all meals
- Sit at 30+ minute intervals throughout the day
- Posture education – Use lumbar roll when sitting
- Pelvic tilts
- Spinal stabilization ex – in supine, neck supported (no bridging)
- Upper extremity active motion (AROM) to tolerance
- Deep breathing exercises
- Cervical AROM in pain-free range – No PROM (NO Stretching)
- Gentle 2-finger isometrics
- Scapular retraction, shoulder shrugs, chin tucks
- Stationary bike
  
- Treadmill – Walking progression program as tolerated
- Lifting to tolerance with proper body mechanics – Pain free

- Ice as needed

## **GOALS**

- Pain control
  - Independent ambulation, mobility and ADLs
- 

## **MONTHS 1 - 3**

- Continue appropriate previous exercises
- Upper extremity Theraband x 6
- Scapular retraction exercises with Theraband
- Biceps / triceps strengthening with light weight
- UBE
- Elliptical trainer
- Upper trap / postural stretches
- Ergonomics education
- TENS and ice to assist with pain relief PRN

## **GOALS**

- Full AROM C-spine
- Able to lift 20 lbs with ease

---

## **MONTHS 3 - 6**

- Weight training (UE & LE) as tolerated
  - No overhead resistance exercises
- Work hardening / MOS specific exercises
- Theraband PNF with lumbar stabilization principles Push-up progression
- Sit-up progression Treadmill – Running progression program

## **GOAL (IF FUSED, PAIN-FREE AND RECONDITIONED)**

- Resume all activities at 6 months post-op

---

## **MONTHS 6+**

- Functional training exercises for sports or work specific activities
- Progressive weight training
- High impact / aerobic activity
- May begin contact sports

---

### **DEVELOPED BY:**

Mark Galland, MD Kenneth Kirby, PT, DPT

### **ADAPTED FROM:**

Physical Therapy Section  
William Beaumont Army Medical Center

