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Postoperative Rehabilitation Protocol:
Rotator Cuff Repair- Small/Medium Tears

Phase I: Weeks 0-4

GOALS: Minimize pain and swelling, Protect rotator cuff, Facilitate full passive range of motion, Maintain muscle activity of rotator cuff/scapular stabilizers, encourage HEP

Immobilization: Use sling for about 4-5 weeks. Longer for SCR patients

Sling to be worn at all times except for hygiene and home exercises

Gradually wean out as approved per MD

Precautions: No AROM

No excessive stretching, sudden movements or excessive motion behind back

No supporting of body weight

Modalities: Cryotherapy

ROM: Home Passive Flexion and ER to tolerance

Use 30 min/session 3x/day for 2-3 weeks

Elbow, wrist and hand ROM to be full

Any ROM limitations will be directed by MD (if other procedures were performed)

PROM to be 120-140 by week 6, progression as tolerated or per individual surgical limitations

Exercises: Pendulums, elbow, wrist and hand motions including grip strengthening, Table slides, and overhead pulleys for patient PROM

PROM.

Joint mobilization as indicated (Grades I-II)

Begin scapular control exercises (start in sidelying)

PROM with L-bar/cane for IR/ER at 30-45 ABD at week 2-3

Phase II: Weeks 4-8

GOALS: Minimize pain, facilitate full PROM, Protect rotator cuff, Maximize strength of rotator cuff/scapular stabilizers

Immobilization: Begin to wean out of sling at 4-5 weeks

Modalities: Cryotherapy

ROM: PROM expected to be 80% in all motions by week 6, aggressively pursue any deficiencies

Begin active/assistive ROM exercises by week 4-6

Exercises: Overhead pulleys, canes and pendulum as indicated

PROM Joint mobilizations as indicated (Grades I-III)

Begin submax isometrics with arm at neutral for RTC and deltoid at week 4-6

Progress scapular stabilization program (sidelying to prone)

Begin Rhythmic Stabilization

Phase III: Weeks 8-12

GOALS: Minimize pain, Facilitate full PROM and AROM, Protect rotator cuff, Maximize strength of rotator cuff/scapular stabilizers, Pursue independent function with upper extremity

Modalities: Cryotherapy

ROM: PROM expected to be full-aggressively pursue any deficits

Begin AROM with arm at side at week 6-8

Gradually work towards active elevation against gravity - avoid scapular substitution

Exercises: Overhead pulleys, canes, other Active Assistive exercises as indicated

PROM as needed

Joint Mobilizations as indicated (Grades III-IV)

Progress scapular PRE's in prone position

Progress to RTC PRE's with bands and weights

Progress active resistive exercises throughout-TOTAL ARM STRENGTHENING

- Be sure to watch control and scapular substitution

- Avoid overhead resistance exercises

Phase IV: Weeks 12- 4+ Months

GOALS: Protect rotator cuff, Maximize strength of rotator cuff and scapular stabilizers, Return to pain free functional sport and/or work activities

Exercises: TAS progression, advancing resistance as tolerated

Throwing program, overhead activities at 4 months if strength goals met