

## **SLAP LESION REPAIR PROTOCOL**

This rehabilitation protocol has been developed for the patient following a SLAP (Superior Labrum Anterior Posterior) repair. It is extremely important to protect the biceps/labral complex for six weeks post-operatively to allow appropriate healing. This protocol has been divided into phases. Each phase may vary slightly based on the individual patient and special circumstances. The **overall goals** of the surgical procedure and rehabilitation are to:

- Control pain and inflammation
- Regain normal upper extremity strength and endurance
- Regain normal shoulder range of motion (ROM)
- Achieve the level of function based on the orthopaedic and patient goals

Early passive ROM with noted limitations is highly beneficial to enhance circulation within the joint to promote healing. The physical therapy should be initiated within the first week following surgery. The supervised rehabilitation program is to be supplemented by a home fitness program where the patient performs the given exercises at home or at a gym facility.

### **Important post-operative signs to monitor include:**

- Swelling of the shoulder and surrounding soft tissue
- Abnormal pain response, hypersensitive, and increase in night pain
- Severe ROM limitations

**Return to activity** requires both time and clinical evaluation. To safely and most efficiently return to normal or high level functional activity, the patient requires adequate strength, flexibility, and endurance. Functional evaluation, including strength and ROM testing is one method of evaluating a patient's readiness to return to activity. Return to intense activities following a SLAP repair requires both a strenuous strengthening and ROM program along with a period of time to allow for tissue healing. Symptoms such as pain, swelling, or instability should be closely monitored by the patient.

### **PHASE ONE: Weeks 1-3**

#### **EXERCISE GOAL:**

#### **RANGE OF MOTION:**

ROM gradual increase

Passive ROM Flexion/Elevation, Week 1: 0-60°; Week 2: 0-75°; Week 3: 0-90°

Passive ROM Scapular Plane/External Rotation, Week 1: 0-15°; Week 2-3: 0-30°

Internal Rotation as tolerated

Pendulum exercises

Rope/Pulley (flex/ abd, scaption)

Wand exercises—all planes within limitations

Posterior capsule stretch

Manual stretching and Grade I-II joint mobs

## **SLAP LESION REPAIR PROTOCOL (page two)**

### **PHASE ONE: Weeks 1-3 (cont'd)**

#### **EXERCISE GOAL:**

##### **STRENGTH:**

Initiate sub maximal isometrics—**NO** elbow flexion  
Initiate scapular stabilizer strengthening  
Initiate UBE without resistance

##### **BRACE:**

Brace for 3 weeks or as noted by Dr. Stewart  
Brace removed for exercises above

##### **MODALITIES:**

E-stim as needed  
Ice 15-20 minutes

#### **GOALS OF PHASE ONE:**

- Promote healing of tissue
- Control pain and inflammation
- Gradual increase in ROM
- Independent in HEP
- Initiate muscle contraction

### **PHASE TWO: Weeks 3-6**

#### **EXERCISE GOAL:**

##### **RANGE OF MOTION:**

ROM gradual increase  
Passive ROM Flexion/Elevation, 0-145°  
Passive ROM Scapular Plane/External Rotation, Week 6: 0-50°  
Internal Rotation Full ROM Week 6  
Pendulum exercises  
Rope/Pulley (flex/ abd, scaption)  
Wand exercises—all planes within limitations  
Posterior capsule stretch  
Manual stretching and Grade II-III to reach goals

##### **STRENGTH:**

Continue isometric activities as in Phase One  
Initiate supine rhythmic stabilization at 90° flexion  
Initiate IR/ER at neutral with tubing  
Initiate forward flexion, scaption, empty can  
Initiate sidelying ER and tricep strengthening

## **SLAP LESION REPAIR PROTOCOL (page three)**

### **PHASE TWO: Weeks 3-6 (cont'd)**

#### **EXERCISE GOAL:**

Prone abduction with external rotation  
Shoulder shrugs with resistance  
Supine punches with resistance  
Initiate UBE for endurance  
Prone rows  
Initiate **light** biceps curls at Week 3

#### **MODALITIES:**

Ice 15-20 minutes

#### **GOALS OF PHASE TWO:**

- Control pain and inflammation
- Enhance upper extremity strength
- Gradual increase in ROM

### **PHASE THREE: Weeks 6-12**

#### **EXERCISE GOAL:**

#### **RANGE OF MOTION:**

Full ROM

Continue all ROM activities from Phase Two at 10-12 Weeks

Posterior capsule stretching

Towel stretching

Rope/Pulley activities

Wand exercises

Manual stretching and Grade III-IV mobs

#### **STRENGTH:**

Continue all strengthening from previous phases increasing resistance and repetition

Initiate plyotoss chest pass

Initiate PNF patterns with theraband

Initiate IR/ER exercises at 90° abduction

Initiate isokinetic IR/ER at neutral at Weeks 10-12

#### **MODALITIES:**

Ice 15-20 minutes

#### **GOALS OF PHASE THREE:**

- Minimize pain and swelling
- Reach full ROM
- Improve upper extremity strength and endurance
- Enhance neuromuscular control
- Normalize arthrokinematics

## **SLAP LESION REPAIR PROTOCOL (page four)**

### **PHASE FOUR: Weeks 12-24**

#### **EXERCISE GOAL:**

##### **RANGE OF MOTION:**

Continue with all ROM activities from previous phases

##### **STRETCH:**

Posterior capsule stretching

Towel stretching

Grade III-IV joint mobs as needed for full ROM

##### **STRENGTH:**

Progress strengthening program with increase in resistance and high speed repetition

Progress with eccentric strengthening of posterior cuff and scapular musculature

Initiate single arm plyotoss

Progress rhythmic stabilization activities to include standing PNF patterns with tubing

UBE for strength and endurance

Initiate military press, bench press, lat pulldown

Initiate sport specific drills and functional activities

Initiate interval throwing program Week 16

Initiate light plyometric program Weeks 12-16

Progress isokinetics to 90° of abduction at high speeds

##### **MODALITIES:**

Ice 15-20 minutes

#### **GOALS OF PHASE FOUR:**

- Full ROM
- Maximize upper extremity strength and endurance
- Maximize neuromuscular control
- Initiate sports specific training/functional training