



# ROTATOR CUFF REPAIR PROTOCOL

**MR DEVINDER GAREWAL**

MBBS (Melb), BMedSci, FRACS (Ortho), FAOrthA

**ORTHOPAEDIC SHOULDER SURGEON**

TEL: 1300 ARMCLINIC | 1300 276 254 EMAIL: ADMIN@MELBOURNEARMCLINIC.COM

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SLING DURATION	WHEN DO I START PHYSIO?	WHEN CAN I START DRIVING?
4 weeks.	You will begin physiotherapy two weeks after your operation.	In approx 4-6 weeks, when you're no longer using the sling and have full control of the vehicle.

### ACUTE PHASE (0-4 WEEKS)

#### GOALS:

Reduce pain  
Protect the integrity of the repair  
Optimise tissue healing  
Maintain/regain range of movement  
Minimise muscle inhibition

#### REHABILITATION:

\*Safe zone: commence with passive range of movement to 90° elevation, 20° external rotation  
Progress to active assisted & active supported mobilisation within that zone  
Elbow, wrist and hand exercises  
Simple scapular mobilisation exercises  
Closed kinetic chain/proprioception exercises – low load and ensuring congruency scapula on thorax  
Gentle isometrics rotator cuff

#### CRITERIA FOR PROGRESSION:

Control of pain  
Range of movement

### INTERMEDIATE PHASE (4-8 WEEKS)

#### GOALS:

Discard use of sling  
Preserve integrity of surgical repair  
Restore functional range of movement including full elevation  
Re-educate cuff recruitment and scapular control through range  
Re-educate sensorimotor/proprioceptive function

#### REHABILITATION:

Progress range of movement to restore functional range  
No forced end range mobilisation  
Begin active range of movement exercises from 6 weeks  
Mobilise capsular restriction if necessary  
Progress cuff and scapular recruitment through range  
Progress kinetic chain integration  
Increase functional emphasis movement pattern correction  
Closed kinetic chain work to enhance co contraction  
Hydrotherapy permitted

#### CRITERIA FOR PROGRESSION:

Pain free functional range of movement  
Good control of rotator cuff and scapular musculature through functional range through functional range

### LATE PHASE (>8 WEEKS)

#### GOALS:

Restore full active range of movement  
Establish optimal neuromuscular control of shoulder girdle musculature  
Restore optimal cuff and scapula control through range and under load  
Optimise function specific power, strength and endurance  
Transference movement pattern correction and cuff/scapula control to functional tasks  
Return to work/sport and recreational activities

#### REHABILITATION:

Progress active range of movement  
Regain optimal range of movement into combined positions  
Enhance neuromuscular control through range and incorporated with kinetic chain  
Closed kinetic chain exercises with increased load  
Functional specific strengthening and endurance exercises  
Sports/functional specific rehab

#### GUIDELINES FOR RETURN TO FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

<b>LIFTING</b>	Light lifting at 6 weeks. Avoid heavy lifting until 6 months.
<b>SWIMMING</b>	Breaststroke 6 weeks, freestyle 12 weeks.
<b>GOLF</b>	3 - 6 months.