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### **Post-Operative Rehabilitation Guidelines for** **Small Rotator Cuff Tears**

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| 1-4 Weeks:  | Sling Immobilization<br>Active ROM Elbow, Wrist and Hand<br>True Passive (ONLY) ROM Shoulder. NO ACTIVE MOTION.<br>Pendulums,<br>Supine Elevation in Scapular plane = 140 degrees<br>External Rotation to tolerance with arm at side. (emphasize ER, minimum goal 40°)<br>Scapular Stabilization exercises (sidelying)<br>Deltoid isometrics in neutral (submaximal) as ROM improves<br>No Pulley/Canes until 5 weeks post-op (these are active motions)   |
| 4-8 Weeks:  | Discontinue abduction pillow at 4 weeks post-op<br>Discontinue sling use at 5 weeks post-op<br>Begin Active Assist ROM and advance to Active as Tolerated<br>Elevation in scapular plane and external rotation as tolerated<br>No Internal rotation or behind back until 6wks.<br>Begin Cuff Isometrics at 5 wks with arm at the side  |
| 8-12 Weeks: | Active Assist to Active ROM Shoulder As Tolerated<br>Elevation in scapular plane and external rotation to tolerance<br>Begin internal rotation as tolerated<br>Light stretching at end ranges<br>Cuff Isometrics with the arm at the side<br>Upper Body Ergometer  |
| 3-12 Months | Advance to full ROM as tolerated with passive stretching at end ranges<br>Advance strengthening as tolerated: isometrics → bands → light weights (1-5 lbs); 8-12 reps/2-3 sets per rotator cuff, deltoid, and scapular stabilizers<br>Only do strengthening 3x/week to avoid rotator cuff tendonitis<br>Begin eccentrically resisted motions, plyometrics (ex. Weighted ball toss), proprioception (es. body blade)<br>Begin sports related rehab at 4 ½ months, including advanced conditioning<br>Return to throwing at 6 months<br>Throw from pitcher's mound at 9 months<br>Collision sports at 9 months |

MMI is usually at 12 months post-op