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Non-Operative Proximal Humeral Fracture Rehabilitation Protocol

General Principles:

- Non-displaced means less than 1cm of displacement and less than 45 degrees of angulation
- Bony Healing occurs usually within 6-8 weeks in adults
- Extension and Internal Rotation not performed until 6 weeks
- Return to normal function and motion may require 3-4 months
- No shoulder extension or internal rotation until 6 weeks post-op

Goals:

- Increase ROM while protecting the fracture site.
- Control pain and swelling (with exercise and modalities)
- Perform frequent gentle exercise to prevent adhesion formation.

PHASE I- Early Motion Phase (0-5 weeks)

Week 1: Early Passive Motion

- Wear the sling at all times except to exercise
- Hand, wrist, elbow, and cervical AROM
- Grip and wrist strengthening
- PROM: supine Flexion to 90 degrees and ER (very gentle)
- Modalities as needed for pain relief or inflammation reduction

Week 2

- Apply hot packs 10 minutes before exercising
- Begin pendulum (Codman) exercises with circles in and out
- Soft tissue mobilization
- Supine ER with a stick to 30 degrees
 - Support elbow on a folded towel with shoulder in 15 degree ABD
- Scapular Stabilization
 - Scapular clocks
 - Scapular retractions (no shoulder extension)

Week 3-5: begin AAROM when pain diminishes and PT is less apprehensive

- Continue all above exercises
- Begin gentle AAROM flexion to 140 degrees if clinical situation is stable
 - Supine Cane flexion
 - Supine AAROM with therapist assistance or with hands clasped



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- Begin pulley for flexion to tolerance
- Begin submaximal isometrics ER, and flex (week 3-4)
- Begin flexion and ABD on slide board or table to tolerance

PHASE II- Active Motion Phase (6-12 weeks)

Week 6-8: AROM

- Establish full PROM
- Begin AROM
 - Supine flexion to patient tolerance
 - Progress to seated (or standing) flexion with a stick
 - Seated flexion with elbow bent and arm close to the body
 - Perform ER and ABD with hands behind head
 - Sidelying ER (pain-free)
 - Serratus Punches
- Begin Extension and IR: (PROM, AROM, and Isometrics)
- Begin multi-angle isometrics
- Continue PROM and begin gentle patient self stretching (week 7-8)
 - Flexion: put hand on wall or top of door
 - ER: hold onto door jam and twist
 - IR: use good arm to pull affected arm into IR

Week 8-10: Early Resisted ROM

- Begin Theraband for IR, ER, flexion, ABD, and extension
- Begin supine IR, ER with 1# (arm supported at 15 degrees ABD) (pain-free)
- Begin UBE with no resistance
- Prone Ext and ABD (pain-free)
- Progress to adding weight to above exercises only if pain-free
- Biceps/ Triceps strengthening with dumbbells

PHASE III- Aggressive Stretching and Strengthening Phase (beginning week 12)

- Isotonic strengthening with weights all directions
- Increase theraband or use rubber tubing
- Increase stretches on door and add prone stretches
- Begin functional or sport activity for strength gain