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2223 Lime Kiln Road, Green Bay, WI 54311 • Phone: 920-430-8113 • Fax: 920-430-8124

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## **Physical Therapy Protocol: Reverse Total Shoulder Arthroplasty**

### **Philosophy:**

In patients with fracture or rotator cuff damage, reverse total shoulder arthroplasty is designed to relieve pain in the shoulder and restore motion. Successful results in shoulder surgery can only be accomplished through the cooperation and team approach of the surgeon, therapist and patient. Pre-op planning should include arranging help around the home prior to surgery, even with activities such as eating, dressing, and personal cares. A strong, pain-free shoulder with functional range-of-motion only comes about through a reconstruction of the affected shoulder with appropriate soft-tissue releases done at the time of surgery. A positive mental attitude and strong desire to return to activities is needed for best outcome.

### ***Post-Op 0-4 Weeks***

#### **OSMS Appointments:**

Medical appointment at 2 & 6 weeks

Physical therapy will begin as directed by your physician and as indicated on your physical therapy order, no formal physical therapy sooner than 4 weeks

#### **Rehabilitation Goals:**

Pain control and one-handed ADLs

Gentle ROM

Protect the surgical reconstruction

#### **Precautions:**

Strict sling use (only off for therapy) for 4-6 weeks

Recommend use of small pillow or towel behind the elbow when supine to avoid hyperextension

NWB on surgical side (no pushing up from chair)

No shoulder active ROM

#### **Suggested Therapeutic Exercises:**

Transfer and gait training with NWB on surgical side

Hand/Wrist/Elbow ROM exercises

Codman's or pendulum exercises TID

Scapular clocks

Scapulothoracic mobilizations

After 4 weeks, initiate AAROM with T-bar/pulleys

Deltoid submaximal isometrics in neutral



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Grade I-II shoulder joint mobilizations

**Cardiovascular Exercises:**

Walking (with sling on)

**Progression Criteria:**

After 6 weeks, with pain-free PROM

***Phase II, (after Phase I criteria met, usually 4-12 Weeks)***

**OSMS Appointments:**

Medical appointment at 6 and 12 weeks

Physical therapy continues twice weekly

**Rehabilitation Goals:**

Restore AROM

Minimize pain

Optimize shoulder strength

**Suggested Therapeutic Exercises:**

Progress PROM

Initiate PROM of IR to tolerance (do not exceed 50°) in scapular plane

AROM, and progress to light deltoid, biceps, and triceps strengthening

Isometrics with progression to TheraBands

**Cardiovascular Exercises:**

Walking, Stairmaster, or stationary bicycle

***Phase III, (after Phase II criteria met, usually 12+ weeks)***

**Rehabilitation Goals:**

Progress functional strength and endurance

**Suggested Therapeutic Exercises:**

Add PREs, no restrictions

Begin functional progression for sports and activity-related tasks

**References:**

- Brown DD, Friedman RJ. Postoperative rehabilitation following total shoulder arthroplasty. *Orthop Clinic North Am.* 1998; 29(3): 535-547.
- Wilcox RBIII, Arslanian LE, Millett PJ. Rehabilitation Following Total Shoulder Arthroplasty. *J Orthop Sports Phys Ther.* 2005;35(12):821-835.