

## Physical Therapy Protocol: Anatomic Total Shoulder Arthroplasty

### Phase 1: Weeks 0 through 6 – Subscapularis Repair Protection

**Physician Goals:** Protect the subscapularis repair which is at its most vulnerable during this time; decrease pain; prevent significant stiffness

**Exercises:** Active elbow, wrist, and hand range of motion 3 to 5 times per day; pendulums; supine passive elevation in the scapular plane to maximum of 130°, passive external rotation with the arm at the side to maximum of 30°; scapular stabilization exercises – retraction, protraction, elevation; deltoid isometrics in neutral

**Comments:** Sling with abduction pillow is to be worn at all times except when doing PT/home exercises, including sleep. Absolutely no active shoulder motion. Driving not recommended until sling is discontinued.

**Total Visits:** 12 – Once to twice per week with daily home stretching

### Phase 2: Weeks 6 through 12 – Motion Recovery

**Physician Goals:** Advance range of motion to full; continue strengthening scapular stabilizers

**Exercises:** Passive stretching in all planes until full passive motion is regained; once full PROM, then begin active assisted ROM and transition to full active ROM as tolerated; cuff isometrics with the arm at the side, upper body ergometer; continue strengthening scapular stabilizers

**Comments:** Wean from sling after 6 week follow up visit; no lifting anything heavier than a cup of coffee; return to work on a case-by-case basis, OK to drive once sling is discontinued, OK for aquatic therapy

**Total Visits:** 18 – Two to three times per week with daily home stretching

### Phase 3: Weeks 12 through 24+ – Strength Recovery

**Physician Goals:** Regain normal function of the shoulder beginning with activities of daily living and progressing to all activities without restrictions

**Exercises:** Continue passive stretching and joint mobilization as needed to regain/maintain full range of motion in all planes, progress resistance work with light hand weights or bands and progress as tolerated, increase weight/resistance when 30 repetitions are easy and painless; bicep curls and resisted supination; two hand plyometrics beginning at 4.5 months postop, transition to one as tolerated

**Comments:** Shoulder strength and range of motion will improve quickly until 6 months postop and then gradually over the course of the first two postoperative years; goal of PT is to regain strength needed to perform all ADLs and recreational activities without pain, transition to HEP when ready; Golfers may begin putting at 6 weeks, chipping at 3 months and progress to full golf by 4.5 months; Light tennis/pickleball at 4.5 months

**Total Visits:** 24 – One to two times per week with daily home stretching; strengthening 3x per week including PT