

Balloon Spacer Protocol
Outpatient Therapy Protocol
Dr. Michael Thomas Edgerton

Patient to be seen 2-3x/week beginning after 1st post-op office visit

MD will note on script if biceps tenodesis was performed

Considerations

- This protocol is used when a balloon spacer is placed WITHOUT a full rotator cuff repair.
If a full rotator cuff repair is completed, use the rotator cuff protocol.
- During the first 3 months post-op, the patient is recommended to avoid quick sudden movements, repetitive movements, lifting with any weight, and any activity that requires force or power.
- Driving is not recommended until the patient can safely hold the steering wheel with both hands and operate the vehicle safely (at minimum 6 weeks post op)

Phase I: 1-4 Weeks Post-Op (Day 1-28)

Sling Immobilization x 6 weeks

Pendulum exercises

PROM of shoulder in supine

- Forward elevation in the scapular plane up to 140 degrees
- ER at side to tolerance (minimum goal of 40 degrees)
- IR in scapular plane to tolerance
- NO IR or extension behind back x 6 weeks

AROM

- Elbow, wrist, and hand exercises
- Deltoid isometrics in a neutral (submaximal) position, as ROM improves, and as tolerated
- NO pulley or cane exercises until 6 weeks post op

*If biceps tenodesis is performed, NO resistive elbow flexion or supination x 6 weeks

Phase II: 4-6 Weeks Post-Op (Day 29-42)

Continue sling immobilization until 6 weeks post-op

AAROM

- Begin AAROM exercises advancing to AROM as tolerated

PROM

- Forward elevation in scapular plane to tolerance
- ER to tolerance
- IR in scapular plane to tolerance
- NO IR or extension behind back until 6 weeks post-op

Phase III: 6-12 Weeks Post-Op (Day 43-84)

Discharge sling

PROM

- All planes to tolerance
- Light stretching at end ranges

AAROM and AROM as tolerated – ok to begin pulley and cane stretches

Begin IR stretching as tolerated

Rotator cuff isometrics with arm at side

Initiate light UBE

Phase IV: Return to Activity Phase (> 12 weeks post-op)

Advance to full ROM with passive stretching at end ranges

Advance strengthening as tolerated: Isometrics → bands → light weights (1-5 lbs.)

- 8-12 reps/2-3 sets per rotator cuff, deltoid, and scapular stabilizers
- Strengthening exercises are completed 3x/week to avoid rotator cuff over use and tendonitis

Begin sports related/more strenuous ADL including advanced conditioning at 4.5 months post op

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Date