

AC Joint Reconstruction Rehabilitation Protocol

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Phase I: Protect Repair (*0 to 8 weeks after surgery*)

- Patients may shower immediately over clear plastic, waterproof dressing
- Sutures are all underneath the skin and will dissolve on their own
- Ice encouraged for the first week at a minimum: should be used 3-4 times per day once the nerve block has worn off.
- Sling should be in place when not performing exercises.
- Initiate exercise program 3 times per day:
 - Immediate elbow, forearm and hand range of motion out of sling
 - Pendulum exercises
 - Passive and active assistive ER at the side to 30, flexion to 130
- No lifting with involved extremity.
- AVOID scapular ROM exercises.

Phase II: Progress ROM & Protect Repair (*8 to 12 weeks after surgery*)

- May discontinue sling.
- Lifting restriction of 5 pounds with the involved extremity.
- Advance active and passive ROM in all planes to tolerance.
- Initiate gentle rotator cuff strengthening.
- Initiate scapular AROM exercises.

Phase III: Full Function (*3 months after surgery*)

- Discontinue lifting restrictions.
- Advance rotator cuff and scapular stabilizer strengthening.
- Initiate functional progression to sports specific activities at 4 months.