

Subacromial Decompression/Debridement Protocol

*If surgery was performed by Dr. VanThiel, please see vanthielmd.com for therapy protocol.

Phase I (1 – 5 days post-op)

- Modalities: PRN for pain and inflammation (ice, IFC)
- Sling: Ultrasling worn continuously except in therapy or during exercise
- ROM:
 - Initiate PROM of shoulder in all planes, as tolerated
 - Pendulum exercises
 - Table stretches
 - Pulleys as tolerated
 - A/PROM of elbow, wrist, and digits
- Exercises:
 - Isometric grip strengthening
 - Scapulothoracic retraction exercises

Phase II (5 days – 4 weeks post-op)

- Modalities: PRN for pain and inflammation (ice, IFC)
- Sling: For 2 weeks, ultrasling worn continuously, and for comfort thereafter
- ROM:
 - AROM flexion to equal/exceed 140 degrees
 - Initiate joint mobilization to GH, AC, and Scapulothoracic joint as tolerated
- Strengthening:
 - Rotator cuff and Scapular strengthening in pain-free ranges while avoiding impingement beginning with AAROM and Isometric strengthening
 - Wrist/forearm isometric and PREs

Phase III (4 weeks – 10 weeks post-op)

- Achieve function ROM in all planes (flexion/abduction >140 degrees)
- Strengthening:
 - Increase RTC and Scapular strengthening while avoiding increased pain symptoms and impingement
 - Begin RTW and Sport-specific strengthening
 - Consider referral to work conditioning program following discharge from therapy



Phase IV (10+ weeks post-op)

- Achieve all goals

Adapted From:

- 1) Brotzman SB, Wilk KE. Clinical Orthopedic Rehabilitation Second Edition. Philadelphia: Mosby; 2003.
- 2) Wilk KE, Reinold MM, Andrews, JR. Rehabilitation Following Arthroscopic Subacromial Decompression. Winchester MA: Advanced Continuing Education Institute, 2004.