

Capsular Release and Debridement

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

Suggested frequency/duration:

- 5x/week for post-op week 1-2
- 3x/week for post-op week 3-4
- 2x/week for post-op week 4+, as needed

Goals of Rehab:

- Relieve pain and edema
- Restore motion
- Strengthen RTC and scapular stabilizers once motion is improved
- No restrictions

Phase I (0 – 7 days post-op)

- Wound care: Observe for signs of infection
- Modalities: prn for pain and inflammation (ice, IFC)
- Brace: Sling for comfort only
- ROM:
 - Use of home CPM as directed by physician (typically 6-8 hours per day)
 - Avoid unnecessary compression of sub-acromial structures during passive and active abduction
- Exercises:
 - Pendulums
 - Pulleys
 - Cane AAROM (flexion, abduction, IR, ER)
 - Stretches into flexion, abduction, IR, ER
 - Posterior capsule stretch
 - Posture education (avoid overuse of upper traps; maintaining normal scapulohumeral rhythm)
- Manual Therapy:
 - PROM all planes of motion
 - Joint mobilizations for pain control

Phase II (1 week – 4 weeks post-op)

- Wound care: Observe for signs of infection
- Modalities: Continue prn
- Brace: D/C use of sling
- ROM: Increase as tolerated
- Strengthening:
 - Continue with phase I exercises
 - Progress AROM as tolerated
 - Pec stretch

- Isometrics (flexion, extension, abduction, IR, ER)
- Theraband for scapular stabilization (keeping arm below 90 degrees)
- Manual Therapy
 - Joint mobilizations (grade I and II) for pain control and to improve arthrokinematics of GH joint

Phase III (4+ weeks)

- Strengthening: Continue with phase I and II
 - Progressive strengthening exercises as tolerated
 - Flexion, Extension, IR, ER, D1, D2
 - Isometrics
 - Free Weights
 - Theraband
 - Scapular stabilizers
 - Prone I/T/Y
 - Theraband
 - Plyometrics in all planes of motion, as needed and as tolerated
- At 6 weeks post-op, can return to sports, as tolerated

Adapted From:

- 1) Columbia University Shoulder, Elbow, and Sports Medicine Service, "Physical Therapy Protocol Arthroscopic Capsular Release ("Frozen Shoulder")"
- 2) SLU Care: The Physicians of Saint Louis University, "Shoulder Manipulation and Arthroscopic Capsular Release Rehab Protocol Prescription"
- 3) Beacon Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine, "Arthroscopic Capsular Release- Rehabilitation Protocol"