



Thomas Obermeyer, M.D.



BARRINGTON
Orthopedic Specialists
Specializing in You

obermeyermd.com

O: 847-285-4318

F: 847-885-0130

Rehabilitation Instructions: Arthroscopic Rotator Cuff Repair (Massive)

WEEKS 0–4: No formal outpatient therapy, healing phase at home for tissue recovery

- **Sling with pillow:** Wear at all times except for hygiene, grooming, home exercises
- **Arm position:** Arm at side or in front; when reclining, a pillow should be placed behind the elbow with sling in place so the elbow is always visible
- **Range of Motion:** pendulums; elbow/wrist motion ONLY
- **Exercises:** Pendulums, gripping

THERAPY Phase I (Weeks 4 – 8 after surgery):

- **Sling:** Wear sling at all times with above exceptions until 6 weeks, then wean to discontinue
- **Arm position:** as above
- **Range of Motion:** PROM then AAROM then as pain permits, arc of motion within comfort range
- **Exercises:** pendulums, then scapular exercises in sling (shrugs, depression, protraction, retraction), then supine well arm assisted elevation in scapular plane and ER with stick
- **Modalities:** Per therapist, including electrical stimulation, ultrasound, heat (before), ice (after)

THERAPY Phase II (Weeks 8 – 12 after surgery):

- **Sling:** Not required, may consider wearing (without pillow) when outside the home
- **Arm position:** Progress to full as tolerated
- **Range of Motion:** AROM without formal restrictions progressing slowly
- **Exercises:** continue Phase I with exercises now sitting upright, incorporate stretches such as table slides and wall walks as tolerated, may advance to isometric strengthening (pillow or folded towel without moving the shoulder), no resistance exercises yet
- **Modalities:** As previous

THERAPY Phase III (Weeks 12 – 16 after surgery):

- **Range of Motion:** increase as tolerated with passive stretching at end ranges
- **Exercises:** continue Phase I/II with home program education (goal 3x/wk), begin resistance exercises with elastic band or hand weights (light), resistance exercises for scapular muscles, rotator cuff, deltoid
- **Athletics:** light athletics if approved at 12 weeks including chipping/putting, swimming, water aerobics, jogging and higher level athletics at 16-20 weeks including golf, tennis