

Rehabilitation Protocol: Arthroscopic Capsular Release

Date of Surgery: _____

Procedure: ☐ Capsular Release ☐ Debridement ☐ Decompression ☐ Distal Clavicle Excision ☐ Biceps Tenodesis

Goal: Maintain the motion gained in surgery – begin outpatient PT immediately after surgery with aggressive PROM and capsular stretching. Concomitant procedure precautions are noted in each phase.

Time points are guidelines – milestones of each phase should be achieved before advancing. Please contact our office with any questions or concerns.

☐ **Phase I (Weeks 0–4)**

- **Sling:** Worn for comfort only weeks 0–2; discontinue weeks 2–4
- **Range of Motion** – PROM to AROM as tolerated – **begin immediately post-op**
- **Therapeutic Exercises**
 - **Weeks 0–2:** Immediate outpatient PT; aggressive PROM and capsular stretching; closed chain scapular exercises
 - **Weeks 2–4:** Continue capsular stretching and PROM; joint mobilization to maximum tolerance; deltoid and rotator cuff isometrics; begin scapular protraction/retraction
 - **Home stretching program 3–5 times daily** starting immediately post-op (see attached)
- **Distal Clavicle Excision:** **No horizontal (cross-body) adduction for 8 weeks**
- **Biceps Tenodesis:** No active elbow flexion or supination; gentle elbow PROM may begin weeks 2–4

☐ **Phase II (Weeks 4–8)**

- **Sling:** None
- **Range of Motion** – Increase as tolerated to full; continue capsular stretching and PROM
- **Therapeutic Exercises**
 - Advance rotator cuff and deltoid isometrics
 - Progress to Therabands and dumbbells as tolerated
- **Biceps Tenodesis:** Introduce gentle AAROM, then AROM elbow flexion/extension without weight; no active supination exercises

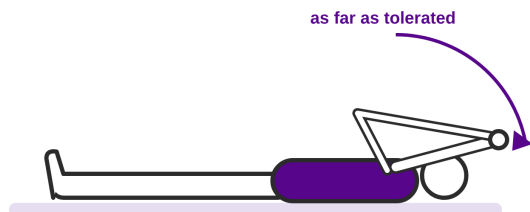
☐ **Phase III (Weeks 8–16)**

- **Range of Motion** – Progress to full motion without discomfort; cross-body adduction may begin if DCE performed
- **Therapeutic Exercises**
 - Advance strengthening as tolerated
 - Begin eccentrically resisted motions and closed chain activities
- **Distal Clavicle Excision:** **No bench press, push-ups, or dips until 12 weeks**
- **Biceps Tenodesis:** No resisted biceps or supination exercises until 12 weeks
- **Return to Activity:** **Advance to sports and full activity as tolerated after 12 weeks**

Home Stretching Program

- Start the day after surgery. Do each stretch **5 times, holding 30 seconds, 3–5 times per day**.
- Use your non-operative arm to move the operative arm – keep the operative arm relaxed. Stretch to a firm pull, not sharp pain. Applying heat before stretching may help.

1. Forward Flexion (Lying Down)



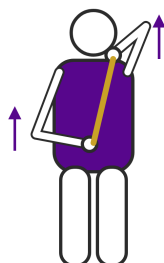
Lie on your back. Grasp the wrist of your operative arm with your other hand and lift the arm up and overhead as far as tolerated. Hold 30 seconds, then slowly lower.

2. External Rotation with Cane (Lying Down)



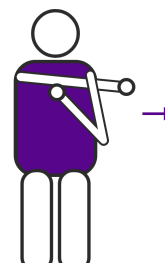
Lie on your back holding a cane or broomstick in both hands, elbows bent to 90° and tucked at your sides. Use your other arm to push the operative hand outward, away from your body. Keep the elbow against your side. Hold 30 seconds.

3. Internal Rotation with Towel (Standing)



Hold a towel over your shoulder with your non-operative hand and grab the bottom end behind your back with your operative hand. Pull the towel upward with the top hand to slide the operative hand up your back. Hold 30 seconds.

4. Cross-Body Stretch (Standing)



Bring your operative arm across your chest. With your other hand, gently pull the elbow toward the opposite shoulder. Hold 30 seconds. **If you had a distal clavicle excision, skip this stretch until 8 weeks after surgery.**