

Post-op rehabilitation program for total shoulder replacement

Problem: arthritic shoulder joint with reduced range of movement and shoulder pain

Aim: to increase range of movement and reduce pain

Important points:

- sling to be worn for 4 weeks

Forbidden:

- no external rotation past neutral for 6 weeks
- no active internal rotation for 6 weeks
- lifting before 6 weeks

Expectations:

- return to desk jobs at 10 days
- driving from end of week eight (if pain and function allows safe driving)
- non-contact sports and freestyle swimming at 3 months

Physiotherapy protocol day 1 onwards:

- Ensure adequate pain relief, neurovascular status normal and no signs of infection
- Hand and elbows exercises
- Pendulums and circles
- Passive external rotation to neutral
- Passive flexion

Physiotherapy protocol after week 4 onwards:

- Active assisted abduction and flexion
- Scapular setting in neutral
- Closed chain exercises in neutral
- start strengthening exercises, except for subscapularis

Physiotherapy protocol after week 6 onwards:

- Active internal rotation
- Active abduction and flexion
- Progress external rotation past neutral
- Check scapular control through range
- Initiate stretching if required

Physiotherapy protocol after week 8 onwards:

- Isometric rotator cuff exercises
- Proprioceptive exercises
- Progress strengthening