

Shoulder Replacement – Rehabilitation Guidelines

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0 to 4 Weeks post-op

- *Passive* range of motion of shoulder (keep the shoulder muscles quiet and let the good arm move the repaired shoulder):
 - Forward elevation: as tolerated
 - Internal rotation: to chest/abdominal wall (do not reach behind your back)
 - External rotation: not beyond _____ degrees
- Active range of motion for elbow, wrist and hand just to prevent stiffness of these joints

4 to 6 Weeks Post-op

- Start *active* elevation (you may now *gradually* use partial muscle function in the repaired shoulder with motion exercises)
- Start first exercising lying down, then gradually start upright exercises
- May now reach behind behind back
- Gradually discontinue sling:
 - Begin using arm for waist level (below shoulder height) light activities as able (no pushing, pulling or lifting)
 - Use sling only for protection and comfort as needed

6 to 9 Weeks Post-op

- Use arm for all light activities as able, including gradual overhead reaching. No lifting, pushing, pulling with any force.
- Full active range of motion with no limits on motion
- Start Physiotherapy (physio may now instruct on adding in cross arm adduction and gentle isometric deltoid and external rotation)

Week 9 and beyond

- Start strengthening, Therabands (elastic bands)
 - Slow and progressive strengthening
 - Avoid shoulder pain with strengthening exercises. If you have some discomfort with strengthening, then back off and use less resistance
- Gradual return to activities
- Do not perform any lifting, pushing or pulling that exceeds the forces you are applying with the strengthening program (as per the physiotherapist)
- No strenuous activity until 6 months
- Keep stretching on your own until 12 months to get the most motion recovery