

Post-op rehabilitation program for ACJ reconstruction

Problem: ACJ dislocation with reduced range of movement and shoulder pain

Aim: to stabilise ACJ, increase range of movement and reduce pain

Important points: to remain in sling for four weeks

Forbidden:

- heavy activities or heavy work before 12 weeks
- no heavy activities or sport above shoulder height and arm pulled back for 3 months (ABER position)

Expectations:

- return to desk jobs at 3-6 weeks
- driving at 6-10 weeks (if pain and function allows safe driving)
- breaststroke swimming at 10 weeks
- contact sports and freestyle swimming at 4 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
- Active external rotation and internal rotation
- Shoulder shrugs and scapular exercises
- Sling for first 4 weeks

Physiotherapy protocol day 21 onwards:

- Begin to wean out of sling over next 3 weeks
- Begin active assisted forward flexion and abduction

Physiotherapy protocol week 7 onwards:

- Active range of movement throughout
- Once achieved concentrate on scapular control and strength exercises

Protocol from 4 months onwards:

- Return to sports and full activities if regained full ROM and 90% strength of contra-lateral side