

PT PROTOCOL

Arthroscopic Shoulder Capsular Release

For Adhesive Capsulitis or Contracture — Rehabilitation Protocol

1

Weeks 0–6

Aggressive PROM & capsular mobility; CPM/pulleys, AROM as tolerated

2

Weeks 6+

Full AROM; begin gentle rotator cuff strengthening

Milestones above are goals, not guarantees; progression is criterion-based. Physical therapy frequency: 3–5 times per week.

Phase 1

Weeks 0–6

Sling: For comfort only; discontinue as soon as able.

Range of Motion

- Pulleys or continuous passive motion (CPM) machine, 3–5 times per day.
- Pendulum exercises.
- Elbow, forearm, and hand range of motion, unrestricted.
- Aggressive passive range of motion and capsular mobility work in all planes.
- Supervised passive range of motion and capsular stretching at least 3 times per week.
- Initiate active range of motion when tolerated, with no restrictions.

Therapeutic Exercises

- Begin scapular stabilizer exercises (protraction, retraction).
- Ice machine/system at least 3–4 times per day during the first week.
- Modalities per PT discretion: electrical stimulation, ultrasound, heat (before), ice (after).

Phase 2

Weeks 6+

Range of Motion

- Full active range of motion.

Therapeutic Exercises

- Continue Phase 1 exercises.
- Begin gentle rotator cuff strengthening, avoiding positions of impingement.
- Modalities per PT discretion.