

# Rotator Cuff Rehabilitation Protocol

**Ethan M. Healy, M.D.**

## Stage I (0 to 4 weeks)

**-Wear sling continuously for 4 weeks.**

May remove sling for tabletop activities (eating, brushing teeth, keyboard/typing) if pain-free.  
May remove sling for exercises, showering/cleansing and dressing.

**-Only PROM**

If no limits on prescription, assume full PROM.

- Pendulum (Codman) exercises
- PROM/AAROM exercises - supine only
- Suggest home pulley use
- Ice following treatment and home exercises
- Scapular stabilization exercises
- Internal rotation to back pocket only

**GOAL:** Full PROM to limits or if no limits given, to symmetric ROM.

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## Stage II (5 to 8 weeks)

**AAROM advance from supine to standing.**  
**Scapular stabilization exercises.**

## Stage III (8 to 12 weeks)

**AROM for all exercises.**

- Use 2 oz. to 1 lb. weights
- Patient should experience only minimal pain with exercises

**Scapular stabilization exercises.**

**GOAL:** Full AROM by week 12.

### **PRECAUTION:**

- Do not increase inflammation or overwork cuff
- 4 oz. weight limit until week 8, then progress as tolerated

## Stage IV (13 to 24 weeks)

**Progress on rotator cuff strengthening exercises.**  
**Emphasis is on home program.**

This gives a general guideline for rotator cuff repair rehabilitation. If you have any questions regarding the protocol or specific concerns about the progress of the patient, please contact Dr. Healy. This protocol may be tailored to meet patient-specific goals.