

Acromioclavicular (AC) Joint Reconstruction

Physical Therapy Protocol

Keys to a Successful Outcome

- Pain > 4/10 = Hold progression
- No horizontal adduction until 6 weeks. At 6 weeks, active horizontal adduction only. At week 12, can initiate horizontal adduction stretch.

Phase	Brace	ROM Goals	WB	Exercises
Weeks 0-6	Worn at all times*	No shoulder A/AAROM; gentle PROM week 2; limitations: FF 90°, ABD 80°, EXT 0°, ER/IR 45° (w/arm in 45° ABD), scapular retraction	NWB	Gentle shoulder pendulum exercises w/ therapist; elbow/wrist/hand ROM and grip strengthening; begin isometrics when comfortable
Weeks 6-12	None	Can begin PROM->AAROM->AROM; Increase ROM parameters by 15° per week IF NOT PAINFUL	NWB	No resistance exercises other than pain-free isometric exercises (deltoid, RTC), wall slides, gentle RTC and scapular strengthening @ 8 weeks, no pushing exercises
Months 3-6	None	Gradual return to full AROM; humeral head stabilization; horizontal adduction stretch okay, IR behind back OK	PWB	Advance strengthening as tolerated: isometrics->therabands->light weights; initiate push-ups onto wall; scapular and latissimus strengthening; seated bench @ week 16
Months 6-9	None	FAROM	WBAT	Progress with exercises as tolerated without restrictions

Patient Instructions

- May take occasional brakes from brace if arm is supported on chair/desk/table (i.e. desk work, eating). Do not let the arm hang unsupported in the first 6 weeks.

General Time Frames for ADLs

- Driving: 2-8 wks
- Running: Treadmill at 3-4 mo, and full running progression 4-6 mo
- Swimming: 6 mo
- Full contact sports: 8-12 mo