



# Rotator Cuff Repair

## Instructions & Exercises to Enhance Your Recovery

Jamestown Regional Medical Center Physical Therapy & Occupational Therapy  
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## **What is a rotator cuff repair?**

Rotator cuff tears are one of the most common injuries of the shoulder. The shoulder is a ball and socket joint with the arm bone (humerus) meeting the shallow socket called the glenoid fossa. This socket is part of the shoulder blade (scapula).

The term “rotator cuff” refers to four muscles of the shoulder that help to support the shoulder joint during rest and movement. These muscles, known as the supraspinatus, infraspinatus, teres minor, and subscapularis, attach the shoulder blade and upper arm bone, and keep the arm bone against the shoulder socket.

Rotator cuff muscles and tendons can be injured over time, or with a sudden injury such as a fall. In an overuse injury, the soft tissues may start to fray, often caused by repeated activities. A tear can be partial or complete, with the muscle being torn into two pieces.

Symptoms of a rotator cuff tear can include shoulder pain, stiffness, and weakness. You may have difficulty raising the arm overhead or lifting objects, especially above shoulder height. Getting dressed, washing your hair, or tucking in a shirt can be difficult. Sleeping can be limited because of shoulder pain.

Rotator cuff repair (RTC repair) is a surgical procedure to repair the injured muscle(s) and/or tendon(s). This may be completed arthroscopically or thru an open procedure.

While recovering from rotator cuff repair surgery, you will need to follow physician recommendations. Therapy will help you learn how to keep the shoulder moving while protecting the healing tissues with activities for stretching, strengthening, and healthy posture.

## **Prepare ahead for recovery**

The recovery process can be aided by planning ahead by practicing exercises and making modifications in your home.

Tips/Recommendations:

- Store commonly used items within reach, between waist and shoulder level
- Use a hand held shower head for easier bathing.
- If bedroom is upstairs, consider sleeping in a “main floor” bed temporarily.

## **Post-Operative Concerns**

- Bruising/discomfort/swelling: this will likely increase when you get home. Continue ice and elevation.
- Some difficulty sleeping. If you cannot lie flat, you may consider sleeping semi-reclined/in a recliner with arm elevated on pillows.
- Constipation associated with pain meds. Communicate needs to physician, consider stool softeners, prune juice, etc.

- The “blahs”: poor stamina with rapid fatigue, decreased appetite. Monitor health.
- A sling or immobilizer will be placed on your arm to hold the shoulder in correct alignment and protect your healing repair. You will be instructed on how to put this on and when it can be removed.
- Use ice/cold packs 15-20 min 3-5x/day. If you received a cryo cuff ice cooler, use as instructed on cooler instructions, or by therapist.

### **Preparation for your hospital procedure**

- Take rubber soled shoes that are easy to take on and off. It is better to have a good fitting slip-on rather than lace up/tie shoes.
- Take clothes that are easy to put on such as elastic waist pants and large shirts that button instead of pull over the head.
- Take the name and number of your family doctor and pharmacy.
- Usually you will be prescribed Physical Therapy after your first follow up physician visit
- If you are concerned you will be unable to return home alone, it is recommended you make arrangements to stay with family or have family or friend stay with you

### **Your Exercise Program**

The better prepared you are, the easier your rehabilitation will be.

The following exercise program is designed to build strength and ease your recovery. Unless instructed otherwise by your Physical Therapist, try to perform each exercise 5-10 repetitions each once daily. Then increase to a total of 30 repetitions or 3 sets of 10, 1-2 times daily.

Call your Physical Therapist if:

- Any exercise causes increased pain or swelling in your shoulder or any other joint or area of your body.
- You are not sure how to safely perform the exercises.
- If you have any further related questions or concerns regarding your program.

**Discontinue any exercise if it causes sharp or increased pain, dizziness, chest pain, shortness of breath, or any unusual symptoms and contact your physician.**

This program is designed to assist you in regaining your mobility and strength following surgery.

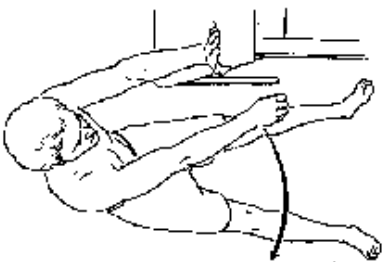
Jamestown Regional Medical Center offers an extensive outpatient rehab program. Please call with questions.

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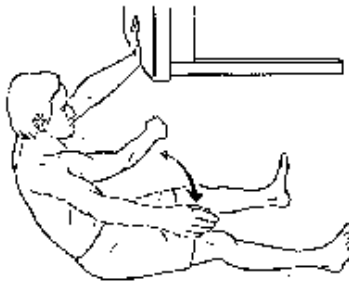
**SHOULDER - 25 ROM: Pendulum (Side-to-Side)**



Let right arm swing freely from side to side by rocking body weight from side to side.

Repeat: \_\_\_\_\_ times per set.  
Do \_\_\_\_\_ sets per session.  
Do \_\_\_\_\_ sessions per day.

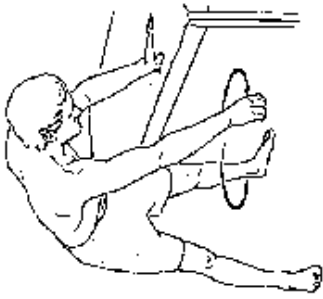
**SHOULDER - 28 ROM: Cross (Horizontal Abduction/ Adduction)**



Reach right arm across body as far as possible, front gull arm out from side.

Repeat: \_\_\_\_\_ times per set.  
Do \_\_\_\_\_ sets per session.  
Do \_\_\_\_\_ sessions per day.

**SHOULDER - 26 ROM: Pendulum (Circular)**



Let right arm move to circle clockwise, then counterclockwise, by rocking body weight in circular pattern.

Circle \_\_\_\_\_ times each direction per set.  
Do \_\_\_\_\_ sets per session.  
Do \_\_\_\_\_ sessions per day.

**HAND - 39 AROM: Elbow Flexion/ Extension**



With left hand palm up, gently bend elbow as far as possible. Then straighten arm as far as possible.

Repeat \_\_\_\_\_ times per set.  
Do \_\_\_\_\_ sets per session.  
Do \_\_\_\_\_ sessions per day.

HAND - 18 AROM: Forearm Pronation / Supination



With right arm in handtable position, slowly rotate palm down until stretch is felt. Relax. Then rotate palm up until stretch is felt.

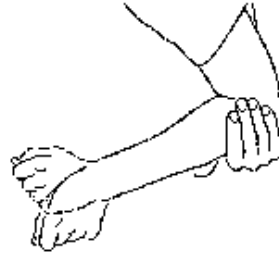
Repeat \_\_\_\_\_ times per set.  
Do \_\_\_\_\_ sets per session.  
Do \_\_\_\_\_ sessions per day.

HAND - 17 AROM: Wrist Flexion / Extension



Actively bend right wrist forward then back as far as possible.  
Repeat \_\_\_\_\_ times per set. Do \_\_\_\_\_ sets per session.  
Do \_\_\_\_\_ sessions per day.

HAND - 42 AROM: Wrist Radial / Ulnar Deviation Against Gravity



With thumb up and face gently bend left wrist forward, then away. Keep elbow bent and supported.

Repeat \_\_\_\_\_ times per set.  
Do \_\_\_\_\_ sets per session.  
Do \_\_\_\_\_ sessions per day.

HAND - 47 Travel Roll Squeeze



With right forearm resting on surface, gently squeeze towel.  
Repeat \_\_\_\_\_ times per set. Do \_\_\_\_\_ sets per session.  
Do \_\_\_\_\_ sessions per day.