



**Acromioclavicular Joint Reconstruction
Grade III-IV AC Joint Sprain
Post-Operative Protocol**

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Phase 1 (weeks 0-6/8) immobilization stage

Goals: Maximally protect the surgical reconstruction. Patient education regarding post-op restrictions. Minimize shoulder pain and inflammatory response.

Patient Education:

- Discuss precautions specific to the nature of the surgical reconstruction.
- Importance of tissue healing and use of ice
- Proper sling use (assure sling provides upward support to the glenohumeral joint) 6-8 weeks as directed by surgeon
- It is okay to perform hand, wrist and elbow exercises including gripping.

Immobilization (sling):

- Absolute immobilization (no glenohumeral ROM exercises and constant sling use) for a variable time of 6-8 weeks, **based on patient-specific factors and surgeon recommendation.**
- If sent to therapy during this period of immobilization with sling, goal of therapy is education. Minimal visits required. Do not start exercises for 6-8 weeks. If insurance limits please contact physician for their recommendation.

Phase 2 (6/8 weeks to 12 weeks) Active Assistive ROM / AROM

- PROM as tolerated. Caution with motions that may increase stress on the AC joint, specifically IR behind back, cross body adduction and end-range forward elevation.
- Wrist and Elbow PRE's
- AAROM (pulley and cane)
- Closed Kinetic Chain: table wash, wall wash, wall push ups
- UBE
- Normalize AROM in all planes, prone clock
- Joint mobilizations to glenohumeral joint as needed in all directions
- Isometrics to shoulder in all directions
- Scapular stabilization/ROM
- After 10 weeks can work on IR behind back if patient can maintain scapular retraction while performing exercise

Goals:

Pain-free AAROM with near full restoration of AROM except for IR behind back
Reduce muscle atrophy
Decrease pain and inflammation

Phase 3 (12-16 weeks) Strengthening phase

- Initiate theraband (punch, pull, ER, and IR)
- Initiate isotonic's (increase wt.)
- Start functional activities/exercises
 - -Overhead sport program initiated 16 weeks per approval of physician
- Advance 1 arm plyometrics
- Return to sport programs
 - 4 months with non-contact athletes
 - 6 months for overhead/contact athletes

DC goals

1. 0-3/10 pain scale
2. Min-to-0 palpable tenderness on clinical exam
3. AROM 5 \pm WNL
4. Strength 4 to 4+/5 depending on skill level and ADL's