



Guidelines for Proximal Humerus Fracture (Non-Operative)

Note: This pathway is designed to serve as a guide to rehabilitation. Indications for progression should be based on patient's complete operative procedure, functional capacity, and response to treatment.

Rehabilitation Phase | Phase 1 | Weeks 1-3

Goals: Modalities to control pain and swelling, protect fracture site, Maintain ROM in surrounding joints, and prevent deconditioning.

Appointments

- No PT for 3 weeks, unless otherwise specified by MD

General Precautions

- ROM and WB'ing limitations per MD
- Sling at all times x 3 weeks (or per MD)
- No cuff strengthening

Therapeutic Exercises

- AROM cervical, elbow, wrist, and hand
- Scapular clocks, shrugs, pinches, PNF

Cardiovascular Exercises

- Bike in sling, walking on treadmill in sling

Criteria for Progression: X-ray evidence of healing, and clearance from MD to begin PT

Rehabilitation Phase | Phase 2 | Weeks 3-6

Goals: Regain full ROM, restore GH and scapula-thoracic rhythm, minimize deconditioning, and modalities to control pain and swelling

Appointments

- Begin physical therapy at 3 weeks post injury if cleared by MD
- Physical therapy 1-2 x/week

Precautions

- DC sling x 3 weeks if cleared by MD

Suggested Therapeutic Exercises

- AROM cervical, elbow, wrist and hand
- Pendelums
- Gripping exercises
- Scapular PNF
- Progress to full PROM all planes
- Supine AAROM for flexion (90 degrees), ER (40 degrees) and hyperextension.
- Submaximal RTC isometrics in neutral for IR, ER, EXT, and ABD

Cardiovascular Exercises

- Treadmill, bike

Criteria for Progression: X-ray evidence of healing and full PROM.

Rehabilitation Phase | Phase 3 | Weeks 6-8

Goals: Restore full AROM, and increase strength

Appointments:

- Continue physical therapy 1-2 x/week

Precautions

- Allowed full PROM, AAROM and AROM without substitution

Suggested Therapeutic Exercises

- Begin with supine AROM flexion, no weights, progress to weights
- Standing wand assisted flexion
- Pulleys with eccentric lowering of involved arm
- Progress all other AROM, supine first then standing
- PNF

Cardiovascular Exercises

- Bike, treadmill, light jogging/swimming (if cleared by MD)

Criteria for Progression: Full AROM

Rehabilitation Phase | Phase 4 | Weeks 10+

Goals: Increase RTC strength and restore scapula-humeral rhythm.

Appointments:

- Continue physical therapy 1-2 x/week

Suggested Therapeutic Exercises

- Posterior capsule stretching if indicated
- Isotonic exercises for RTC, scapular muscles
- PNF
- Theraband rows, ER, IR, shoulder extension
- Progressive strengthening program using bands, light dumbbells for RTC, deltoid and scapula
- Prone scapular strengthening (T's, Y's, W's)
- Begin overhead exercises (if no impingement):
 - Ball Taps
 - Totally Gym pull ups

Cardiovascular Exercises

- No restriction unless directed by MD

Criteria for Progression: DC to HEP