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Arthroscopic Debridement of Type I and III SLAP Lesions Protocol

The intent of this protocol is to provide the clinician with a guideline of the post-operative rehabilitation course of a patient that has undergone an arthroscopic debridement of a type I or III SLAP lesion. It is no means intended to be a substitute for one's clinical decision making regarding the progression of a patient's post-operative course based on their physical exam/findings, individual progress, and/or the presence of post-operative complications. If a clinician requires assistance in the progression of a post-operative patient they should consult with the referring Surgeon.

Type I SLAP lesions have degenerative fraying of the superior labrum but the biceps attachment to the labrum is intact. The biceps anchor is intact.

Type III SLAP lesions involve a bucket-handle tear of the superior labrum with an intact biceps anchor.

Generally, patients with Type I and Type III SLAP lesions typically require simple arthroscopic debridement of the labrum and do not require anatomic repair. This generally means that rehabilitation is more accelerated for these repairs. There, however, are cases in which the patient has other pathology, such as rotator cuff pathology, which may change the rehabilitation plan.

Progression to the next phase based on Clinical Criteria and/or Time Frames as Appropriate.

Phase I – Motion Phase (Day 1-14):

Goals:

- Re-establish nonpainful range of motion (ROM)
- Minimize muscular atrophy
- Decrease pain/inflammation

Sling

- Patient will be in a sling for 3-4 days postoperatively for comfort.

Passive range of motion/active assisted range of motion (PROM/AAROM)

- Pendulums
- Pulleys (begin when patient has adequate glenohumeral elevation: 90-110°)
- Cane exercises
 - flexion/extension
 - abduction/adduction
 - External rotation/internal rotation (ER/IR) (begin at 0° abduction, progress to 45°, then 90°)
- Self-stretches (capsular stretches)

Strengthening

- Isometrics
- **No biceps isometrics for five to seven days postoperative**
- May initiate band exercises for ER/IR at 0° abduction late phase (seven to 10 days postoperative)

Decrease pain and inflammation

- Ice, medication, modalities

Criteria to progress to phase II

- Full PROM
- Minimal pain and tenderness

Phase II – intermediate phase (weeks 2-4)

Goals

- Enhance muscular strength
- Normalize arthrokinematics
- Improve neuromuscular control of shoulder complex

Week 2:

- Begin AROM all directions to tolerance

Week 3:

Exercises

- Initiate isotonic program for shoulder and scapulothoracic musculature with dumbbells as appropriate
 - resisted ER/IR at 0° abduction
 - sidelying ER, abduction, horizontal abduction and adduction
 - prone rowing
 - PNF manual resistance with dynamic stabilization

Normalize arthrokinematics of shoulder complex

- Joint mobilization
- Continue stretching of shoulder (ER/IR at 90° of abduction)
- Initiate neuromuscular control exercises
- Initiate proprioception training
- Initiate trunk exercises
- Initiate UE endurance exercises

Decrease pain/inflammation

- Continue use of modalities prn

Week 4:

Exercises

- Begin Thrower's ten program (see protocol)
- Emphasis on rotator cuff and scapular strengthening
- Dynamic stabilization drills

Criteria to enter phase III

- Full nonpainful AROM and PROM
- No pain or tenderness
- 4+/5 strength in deltoid and rotator cuff

Phase III dynamic strengthening phase, advanced strengthening phase (week 5-7)

Goals

- Enhance strength, power, and endurance
- Enhance neuromuscular control
- Begin gentle sport specific preparation activities

Exercises

- Continue thrower's ten program (see thrower's ten protocol)
- Continue dumbbell strengthening (rotator cuff, deltoid)
- Initiate strengthening exercises in the 90°/90° for ER/IR (slow/fast sets)
- Strengthening of scapulothoracic musculature
- Biceps strengthening

- Initiate plyometrics (two hand drills progress to one hand drills)
- Diagonal patterns (PNF)
- May initiate isokinetic strengthening
- Continue endurance exercises: neuromuscular control exercises
- Continue proprioception exercises

Criteria for progression to phase IV

- Full ROM
- No pain or tenderness
- Satisfactory clinical examination

Phase IV: Return to Activity Phase (Week 8 and Beyond)

Goal

- Progressively increase activities to prepare patient for full functional return

Exercises

- Initiate intervals sport program (e.g., throwing, tennis)
- Continue all exercises as in phase 3 (throw and train on same day), (lower extremity and UE on opposite days).
- Progress interval program