SLAP Repair Procedure

Phase 1: immediate postoperative phase “protected motion” (day 1-week 6)

Goals:
• Protect the anatomic repair
• Prevent negative effects of immobilization
• Promote dynamic stability
• Diminish pain and inflammation

Week 0-2
• Sling for 4 weeks
• Sleep in immobilizer for 4 weeks
• Elbow/hand PROM
• Hand-gripping exercises
• Passive and gentle shoulder active assistive ROM exercise
  o Flexion to 60⁰ (week 2, flexion to 75⁰)
  o Elevation in scapular plane to 60⁰
  o ER/IR with arm in scapular plane
  o ER to 10⁰-15⁰
  o IR to 45⁰
  o No active ER or extension or abduction
• Submaximal isometrics for shoulder musculature
• No isolated biceps contractions
• Cryotherapy, modalities as indicated

Week 3-4
• Discontinue use of sling at 4 weeks
• Sleep in immobilizer until week 4
• Continue gentle ROM exercises (PROM and AAROM)
  o Flexion to 90⁰
  o Abduction to 75⁰-85⁰
  o ER in scapular plane to 25⁰-30⁰
  o IR in scapular plane to 55⁰-60⁰
  (Note: rate of progression based on evaluation of the patient)
• No active ER, extension, or elevation
• Initiate rhythmic stabilization drills
• Tubing ER/IR at 0⁰ abduction

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• Continue isometrics
• Continue use of Cryotherapy

Week 5-6
• Gradually improve ROM
  o Flexion to 145°
  o ER at 45° abduction: 45°-50°
  o IR at 45° abduction: 55°-60°
• May initiate stretching exercises
• May imitate light (easy) ROM at 90° abduction
• Continue tubing ER/IR (arm at side)
• PNF manual resistance
• Initiate active shoulder abduction (without resistance)
• Initiate “full can” exercise (weight of arm)
• Initiate prone rowing, prone horizontal abduction
• No biceps strengthening

Phase 2: intermediate phase: moderate protection phase (weeks 7-12)
Goals:
• Gradually restore full ROM (week 10)
• Preserve the integrity of the surgical repair
• Restore muscular strength and balance

Week 7-9
• Gradually progress ROM
  o Flexion to 180°
  o ER at 90° abduction: 90°-95°
  o IR at 90° abduction: 70°-75°
• Continue to progress isotonic strengthening program
• Continue PNF strengthening
• Initiate thrower’s ten program
• May begin AROM biceps
• May initiate slightly more aggressive strengthening
• Progress ER to throwers motion
  o ER at 90° abduction: 110°-115° in throwers (weeks 10-12)
• Progress isotonic strengthening exercises
• Continue all stretching exercises
  o Progress ROM to functional demands (ie, overhead athlete)
• Continue all strengthening exercises
Phase 3: minimal protection phase (weeks 12-20)
Goals:
• Establish and maintain full PROM and AROM
• Improve muscular strength, power, and endurance
• Gradually initiate functional activities

Criteria to enter Phase 3:
• Full non-painful AROM
• Satisfactory stability
• Muscular strength (good grade or better)
• No pain or tenderness

Weeks 12-16
• Continue all stretching exercises (capsular stretches)
• Maintain throwers motion (especially ER)
• May begin resisted biceps and forearm supination exercises
• Continue strengthening exercises
  o Throwers ten program or fundamental exercises
  o PNF manual resistance
  o Endurance training
  o Initiate light plyometric program
  o Restricted sport activities (light swimming, half golf swings)

Weeks 16-20
• Continue all exercise listed above
• Continue all stretching
• Continue throwers ten program
• Continue plyometric program
• Initiate interval sport program (throwing, etc.)

Phase 4: Advanced strengthening phase (weeks 20-26)
Goals:
• Enhance muscular strength, power, and endurance
• Progress functional activities
• Maintain shoulder mobility

Criteria to enter Phase 4:
• Full non-painful AROM
• Satisfactory static mobility
• Muscular strength 75%-80% of contralateral side
• No pain or tenderness
Weeks 20-26
- Continue flexibility exercises
- Continue isotonic strengthening program
- PNF manual-resistance patterns
- Plyometric strengthening
- Progress interval sport programs

Phase 5: Return-to-activity (months 6-9)

Goals
- Gradual return to sport activities
- Maintain strength, mobility and stability

Criteria to enter Phase 5
- Full functional ROM
- Muscular performance isokinetic (fulfills criteria)
- Satisfactory shoulder stability
- No pain or tenderness

Exercises
- Gradually progress sport activities to unrestrictive participation
- Continue stretching and strengthening program

Abbreviations:  ROM, range of motion; ER, external rotation; IR, internal rotation; PROM, passive range of motion; AAROM, active assisted range of motion; PNF, proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation.