



Keith T. Corpus, MD

Adhesive Capsulitis (Frozen Shoulder)

This information and protocol is a guideline, individual variations and changes will apply

PHASE I (0-4 MONTHS, POSSIBLE 12 MONTHS) INFLAMMATION PAIN/FREEZING PHASE

GOALS:

- Relieve pain and inflammation
- Maintain motion – attempt to prevent further motion loss
- Patient education

PRECAUTIONS:

- Activities that cause increased pain/symptoms

TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Range of Motion: passive ROM/stretch in all planes. Emphasize passive stretching and maintenance of motion as pain tolerates.
- Modalities: heat, cryotherapy, PRN
- Strengthening: None. Focus on ROM improvements.
- HEP: emphasize patient compliance with passive stretching 5 times per day.

MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR ADVANCEMENT:

- Decreased pain/symptoms
- Maintain ROM

PHASE II (4-8 MONTHS, POSSIBLE 16 MONTHS) FROZEN PHASE

GOALS:

- Re-establish pain-free ROM
- Maintain reduction of pain/inflammation

PRECAUTIONS:

- Activities that cause increased symptoms
- Gradually allow increase in functional activities
- No prolonged overhead activities
- No overhead lifting activities

TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Range of Motion: passive ROM/stretch in all planes. Emphasize passive stretching and maintenance of motion gains.
- Joint Mobilizations: Continue mobilization and self-capsular stretching.
- Modalities: heat, cryotherapy, PRN
- Strengthening: None. Focus on ROM improvements.
- HEP: emphasize patient compliance with passive stretching 5 times per day.

MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR ADVANCEMENT:

- Maintenance of pain-free ROM



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PHASE III (8-12 MONTHS, POSSIBLE 24 MONTHS THAWING/MOTION RECOVERY PHASE

GOALS:

- Re-establish pain-free complete ROM
- Maintain flexibility/ROM
- Gradual increase in functional activity level
- Normalize kinematics of shoulder complex
- Normalize muscle strength
- Maintain reduction of pain/inflammation

PRECAUTIONS:

- Activities that cause increased symptoms
- Gradually allow increase in functional activities

TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Continue all stretching and ROM exercises
- Continue capsular stretch and maintain or increase flexibility in all planes
- Modalities: heat, cryotherapy, PRN
- Strengthening: Once full ROM, begin periscapular strengthening and RC strengthening.
- HEP: emphasize patient compliance with passive stretching 5 times per day.

MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR ADVANCEMENT:

- Full pain-free ROM
- No pain or tenderness
- Strength test fulfills criteria

PHASE IV RETURN TO ACTIVITY PHASE

GOALS:

- Unrestricted symptom free activity

PRECAUTIONS:

- None

TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Initiate sport/activity specific training
- HEP: flexibility, ROM, and strength protocol.

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