

Rotator Cuff Repair Protocol

Intraoperatively, after a rotator cuff repair, we determine the amount of abduction where the tension on the repair exists as we lower the arm. For some repairs, this may require 90 degrees of abduction, for others, it might require minimal abduction. We have the PMI 20-90 shoulder therapy system adjusted and inflated to the appropriate degree of abduction and the PMI 20-90 is placed on the patient's operative shoulder in the operating room.

At discharge, the patient and the patient's family are given post-operative instructions on utilizing the PMI 20-90. For larger, more tenuous repairs, we recommend 4-7 days or more of maintained abduction. Once pain is improved, and we are certain anesthetic blocks have resolved, we begin slowly decreasing the degree of abduction 15 degrees at a time once or twice daily until the PMI 20-90 is fully deflated and in its 20 degree, fully lowered position. We want the anesthetic block resolved as we believe pain is an important feedback monitor for how quickly you can decrease the abduction. We have found that patients do not mind the abduction for a short period of time especially when they are restricted to their homes. It's when they become more mobile and active do they mind the inconvenience of the significant abduction of a brace. Once the PMI 20-90 has been fully lowered, the patient may begin utilizing the therapeutic benefits of the continuous passive motion (CPM) function. The PMI pump allows the patient to customized the degree of abduction utilizing the multiple settings for degrees of abduction based on surgeon preference or patient tolerance.

Smaller tears can be treated more aggressively if the surgeon prefers. We recommend the PMI 20-90 be placed in some degree of abduction especially until the anesthetic block has resolved. The protective effects of pain can then be utilized to determine when the abduction can be decreased. At this point when the PMI 20-90 is completely deflated, the CPM function can be utilized.

Another therapeutic use of the PMI 20-90 is for pain management. Position of comfort is often difficult to achieve during the recovery process. We have found that varying degrees of abduction, some significant, are desired and preferred by the patient when resting or sleeping. The PMI 20-90 gives you this versatility. The CPM feature of the PMI 20-90 has also shown to assist in post-operative pain management and prevention of adhesive capsulitis.