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Post-op Proximal Humerus Fracture PT Protocol

Post op Day 1-Week 2

Goal of this time period is to decrease swelling, control pain, and protect the shoulder while preventing post op stiffness. These exercises will be done at home under the supervision of a home health therapist.

- Patient to do daily pendulum exercises for the operative shoulder 3 times a day

- Pendulums should be done at an estimated diameter of a large dinner plate; 4 minutes in a clockwise fashion and 4 minutes in a counter clockwise fashion
- Patient also should do active elbow/wrist/hand ROM exercises for 5 minutes after completing the pendulum exercises
- Patient should ice the shoulder for 10-15 minutes after completing exercises
- Patient should wear the shoulder immobilizer at all other times when not doing PT to protect the surgical repair
- No passive forward elevation or external rotation exercises are to be done during the first 2 weeks post-op.

Week 3-6

Goal of this period is to initiate passive ROM but continue to protect the surgical repair. Patient will attend PT 3 times a week during this time.

- Patient should start each PT session with pendulum exercises to loosen up the shoulder
- Heat before PT begins and then ice after the session
- Patient to progress to supine passive forward elevation and external rotation with goals of 120 degree of FE and 20 degrees of ER
- This should be continued for weeks 3 and 4
- At the end of week 4 the patient can remove the shoulder immobilizer and begin using the arm for light activities of daily living
- Starting at week 5 patient can attempt to progress to FE of 140 degrees and ER of 30 degrees
- No strengthening exercise are to be done during this post-op period

Weeks 7-10

Goal of this period is to continue to improve ROM and use the arm for light activity. Patient should continue going to therapy 3 times a week.

- Patient can be progressed to passive ROM as tolerated
- At this point should advance to active assisted ROM using pulley, cane, etc.
- Patient should focus on internal rotation stretching behind back as well
- At the beginning of week 9 patient can begin some deltoid isometrics exercises and progress active ROM as tolerated

Weeks 11-12

Goal at this point is to progress to strengthening the shoulder. Patient should continue to go to PT 3 times a week and at the end of week 12 be given a detailed home exercise shoulder strengthening program.

- Progress to gentle strengthening exercises at this point with low weight higher repetition exercises
- Focus on rotator cuff, scapular stabilizer and anterior deltoid strengthening
- At the end of week 12 patient can return to all activities including recreational activities as well (golf, swimming, tennis etc)
- Patient should continue their home strengthening program 3-4 times a week up to the six month post-op point.