

### 3 Weeks and onwards

- Regain active range of movement as pain allows
- Strength training can commence once full range of movement has been achieved and scapula-humeral rhythm has been restored. This must never be earlier than 6 weeks and never before full pain free movement in flexion and external rotation.

### Milestones to aim for:

- Full range of movement
- Full muscle power
- Driving when comfortable after the sling has been removed
- Light work at 6 weeks (on lifting), medium (light lifting below shoulder level) 12 weeks onwards, heavy (above shoulder level) 3-6 months
- Most are comfortable between 6-12 weeks

## Information for Physiotherapists

### Guidelines: Sub-Acromial Decompression +/- ACJ Excision +/- Biceps Tenotomy

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## The Shoulder

The rotator cuff tendons around the glenohumeral joint are covered by an arch which consists of the bony acromion and the coraco-acromial ligaments. The space under the acromion is called the subacromial space. The structures within the space include the bursa and the tendons of the rotator cuff.

Subacromial impingement is usually found when:-

- bony changes occur either on the under surface of the acromion or the acromio-clavicular joint
- The coracoacromial ligament thickens and shortens.
- The Bursa becomes inflamed and may become thickened.
- Often there may be some degeneration or early partial thickness tearing of the rotator cuff tendons.

## The operation

The operation is usually done arthroscopically.

The operation aims to release the ligament and smooth out the bone of the acromion, effectively making the subacromial space larger and so decreasing the pressure on the tendons.

The guidelines that follow are a framework of basic exercises that should be carried out at each of the three different stages of the rehabilitation programme. The milestones may be used to assess whether you feel the patient is making good progress or not.

## Week 0 to 2

- Check postoperative instructions.
- Active assisted flexion i.e. through pendulum exercises with the arm supported (cradling technique), active assisted exercises in standing or lying etc.
- External rotation range of movement as comfortable e.g. using a stick.
- Scar massage
- Sling as per post op instructions (varies between 48 hours and 10 days)

## Milestones to aim for:

- Active assisted flexion to at least 90 degrees or beyond as pain allows
- External rotation should be equal to opposite side