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AC Joint Reconstruction Protocol (from shoulderdoc.co.uk)

Post op	
Day 1 - 3 weeks Level 1 Exercises	<p><i>Sling for 3 weeks (athletes can wean off sooner under guidance of club therapist)</i></p> <p><i>Teach axillary hygiene</i></p> <p><i>Teach postural awareness and scapular setting</i></p> <p><i>Core stability exercises as appropriate)</i></p> <p><i>Proprioceptive exercises (minimal weightbearing below 90 degrees)</i></p> <p><i>Active assisted flexion as comfortable</i></p> <p><i>Active assisted external rotation as comfortable</i></p> <p><i>Do not force or stretch</i></p>
3 - 6 weeks Level 2-3 exercises	<p><i>Wean off sling</i></p> <p><i>Progress active assisted to active ROM as comfortable</i></p> <p><i>Do not force or stretch</i></p>
6 - 12 Weeks Progress Level 3+ exercises	<p><i>Regain scapula & glenohumeral stability working for shoulder joint control rather than range</i></p> <p><i>Gradually increase ROM</i></p> <p><i>Strengthen</i></p> <p><i>Increase proprioception through open & closed chain exercise</i></p> <p><i>Progress core stability exercises</i></p> <p><i>Incorporate sports-specific rehabilitation</i></p> <p><i>Plyometrics and perturbation training</i></p>
Milestones	
Week 6	Active elevation to pre op level
Week 12	Minimum 80% range of external rotation compared to asymptomatic side Normal movement patterns throughout range
Failure to achieve milestones	Referral to surgeon

AC Joint Reconstruction Protocol cont/d

Return to functional activities	
Return to work	Sedentary job: as tolerated Manual job: 3 months
Driving	6-8 weeks
Swimming	Breaststroke: 6 weeks Freestyle: 12 weeks
Golf	3 Months
Lifting	Light lifting can begin at 3 weeks. Avoid lifting heavy items for 3 months.
Contact Sport	E.g. Horse riding, football, martial arts, racket sports and rock climbing: 3 months