

**Orthopaedic and Spine Institute
21 Spurs Lane, Suite 245, San Antonio, TX 78240**

www.saspine.com

Tel# 210-487-7463

Joel B. Nilsson, M.D., P.A.

SLAP Repair Protocol

Phase 1 : First 3 weeks

- Wound care as outlined on the [Shoulder Arthroscopy Rehabilitation](#) page
- If you have had debridement (removal of the damaged tissue but no repair) no further rehabilitation is required. A sling will be provided for comfort only.

If you have had repair of the SLAP lesion:

- You must keep your immobiliser sling on at this stage
- You can remove the sling for washing as long as you keep your hand in front of your stomach
- You must take the arm out of the sling and gently bend and straighten your elbow to stop it becoming stiff
- Gently lift the affected arm forwards with the good hand several times a day, do not actively lift the arm forwards
- Do not attempt to use the biceps muscle (to lift anything) for the first 3 weeks

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Phase 2 : 3-6 weeks

- You will be seen in the clinic for a wound check at 3 weeks
- You can discard the sling during the day but you should continue to wear it at night
- Start to actively lift the arm straight forwards but do not lift it higher than level with the shoulder (horizontal)
- Start to work on lifting the arm out to the side (like a wing) with the palm facing the floor
- You must still not lift anything heavier than 2kg until 6 weeks
- Do not raise the arm above shoulder height until 6 weeks

Phase 3 6-12 weeks

- You should now start with the physiotherapist
- The sling can now be discarded completely
- Start to work on external rotation (elbow in to the side, hand pointing forward, swing the hand out to the side keeping the elbow in)
- Aim: Forward flexion 100% preop, Abduction and external rotation 75% at 12 weeks. Once this has been achieved strength work can be developed.

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Phase 4 12+ weeks

- You will be seen in the clinic at 12 weeks
- At this stage you may start strength work if you have not already done so
- Aim:
- For most lesions: return to throwing by 3-4 months
- For biceps tendon reattachment: return to throwing by 4-6 months