

Views From the E-List* -- Shoulder

Q: Help with a hemiarthroplasty referred to me!

R: I work with a lot of patients status post shoulder surgery in my practice and I don't believe that there are any specific exercises or ranges to avoid. I doubt that the PT would have referred her to the program if there was potentially any harm. Mindy, MPT

R: Absolutely - there are ROM precautions that you need to avoid!! It's all depending on the type of surgery, how fragile the repair and/or how far out they are post operative as well as how conservative the MD is. I can give numerous examples is needed.... Andrea

Q: What precautions?

R: As a quick example post operative RCR (supraspinatus), TSR and hemiarthroplasty would be IR for approx 6 weeks. There are also guidelines for SLAP, Bankarts (anterior or posterior) repair as well as if it was a mini vs open repair. Again this can be more conservative or aggressive based on the MD, the extent of the surgery, etc, etc.... Andrea

R: The research for hemiarthroplasty shows resistive IR as potentially damaging the repair for extensive periods of time. The risk of injury can potentially lead to a failed procedure and the best rule is at least do no harm.

So for most concerns it is wise to avoid resistive IR. The implication for the success of the procedure demands caution.

Lynne, PT

R: Certainly there are few physicians who have been more supportive of aquatics as the ideal environment for post-op rehab than I am. That said, because of the pain dampening effects of the aquatic environment combined with the lack of ground or gravity reaction forces, it is quite possible to injure the patient during the course of early rehab. Pain is an entirely individualistic phenomenon. Many people will push themselves into a potentially injurious situation, feeling that "no pain, no gain."

Close communication between therapist and physician is critical. It does not take a large number of failed surgical events to convince a physician that aquatics is dangerous. While we build a reputation of safety and enhanced recovery, we need to be aware that there is a physiologic chronometry to tissue healing. Knowledge of these time parameters is important to any therapist involved in rehabilitation. The aquatic environment facilitates optimal recovery, but does not have magical properties. It just promotes the

optimal situation.

Tissue healing precedes joint movement, which precedes proprioception, which precedes force tolerance, which precedes normal motion.

Bruce, MD

**Opinions and suggestions expressed in this column represent e-list member responses to the query posted. They are not represented by the Aquatic Therapy and Rehab Institute and/or the author(s) of this column as recommendations regarding appropriate practice.*