Subacromial Decompression/
AC Joint Excision Protocol
Subacromial Decompression/ACJ Excision

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sling</th>
<th>When will I go home?</th>
<th>What can I do?</th>
<th>What can't I do?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-5 days</td>
<td>You will be discharged on the same day as the operation</td>
<td>Any range of motion without causing pain</td>
<td>Respect pain, no forced movement or repeated overhead activities</td>
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**Acute phase (0-2 weeks)**

**Goals**
- Reduce pain
- Restore range of movement
- Minimise muscle inhibition
- Discard sling 3-5 days after operation

**Rehabilitation**
- Active assisted/active supported mobilization respecting pain
- Isometric rotator cuff exercises
- Ensure scapular control
- Scapular stabiliser exercises
- Postural correction

**Criteria for progression**
- Reduction and control of pain
- Range of movement (should achieve >90° elevation by end of first week)
- Compliance with exercises

**Intermediate phase (2-6 weeks)**

**Goals**
- Reduce pain further
- Restore functional range of movement
- Cuff and scapular control

**Rehabilitation**
- Progress cuff and scapula recruitment and control through range
- Continue to increase range of movement
- Progress kinetic chain integration
- Increase functional emphasis movement pattern correction
- Hydrotherapy permitted

**Criteria for progression**
- Pain free functional range of movement
- Control of cuff and scapular through functional range
Late phase (>6 weeks)

Goals
- Restore optimal cuff and scapula control through range
- Optimise function specific power, strength and endurance
- Return to work, sport and recreational activities

Rehabilitation
- Ensure neuromuscular control through range and incorporated with kinetic chain
- Function specific strengthening and endurance exercises
- Continue to strengthen cuff and scapular musculature

Guidelines for return to functional activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Driving</th>
<th>Lifting</th>
<th>Swimming</th>
<th>Golf</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 week</td>
<td>As able</td>
<td>Breaststroke 2 weeks, Avoid freestyle for 6 weeks</td>
<td>6 weeks</td>
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