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Adhesive Capsulitis Protocol

Adhesive capsulitis (commonly referred to as "frozen shoulder.") is usually a self-limiting condition. It generally responds to a non-aggressive approach. Patients need to be educated in the diagnosis and its nuances. A home exercise program is vital for these patients as well as total patient compliance.

Goal:

Restore normal ROM

Frequency and Duration:

Home exercise program

Aquatic therapy - one time per week

Land therapy - one time per week or ever other week

Home exercise program: Self-mobilization

Self-stretches through low-load prolonged stretch

Cane/wand activities

Distal joint ROM (elbow and wrist flexion and extension)

Resistive exercises with therabands for scapular stabilizer and rotator cuff Warmth/Ice pre/post exercise

Aquatic therapy:

Deep-water exercises: i.e. cycling, jogging

Shallow water exercises: i.e. upper extremity ROM

Self-stretch utilizing the water's buoyancy

Land therapy:

Hot pack prior to mobilization

PROM in low-load prolonged stretch positions (stabilize scapula to maximize glenohumeral motion)

Grade II/III joint mobilization (especially end ranges)

Modalities PRN - electrical stimulation, ultrasound

AROM utilizing new PROM

Resistive exercises to stabilize scapula/strengthen rotator cuff

Cardiovascular training to promote oxygen intake, increase metabolism, increase endorphin release



ADHESIVE CAPSULITIS PROTOCOL