

**REHABILITATION GUIDELINES FOR  
PROXIMAL HUMERUS FRACTURE (NON-OPERATIVE)**

**PHASE I (1-3 WEEKS)**

**DATES:**

Appointments	No PT for 3 weeks, unless otherwise specified by MD
Rehabilitation Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modalities to control pain and swelling</li> <li>• Protect fracture site</li> <li>• Maintain ROM in surrounding joints</li> <li>• Prevent deconditioning</li> </ul>
Precautions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ROM and WB'ing limitations per MD</li> <li>• Sling at all times x 3 weeks (or per MD)</li> <li>• No cuff strengthening</li> </ul>
Suggested Therapeutic Exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AROM cervical, elbow, wrist and hand</li> <li>• Scapular clocks, shrugs, pinches, PNF</li> </ul>
Cardiovascular Exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bike in sling, walking on treadmill in sling</li> </ul>
Progression Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• X-ray evidence of healing</li> <li>• Clearance from MD to begin PT</li> </ul>

**PHASE II (3-6 WEEKS)**

**DATES:**

Appointments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin physical therapy at 3 weeks post injury if cleared by MD</li> <li>• Physical therapy 1-2 x/week</li> </ul>
Rehabilitation Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regain full ROM</li> <li>• Restore GH and scapula-thoracic rhythm</li> <li>• Minimize deconditioning</li> <li>• Modalities to control pain and swelling</li> </ul>

## REHABILITATION GUIDELINES FOR PROXIMAL HUMERUS FRACTURE (NON-OPERATIVE)

(Phase II continued) Precautions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DC sling x 3 weeks if cleared by MD</li> <li>AAROM to 90 degrees forward flexion and 40 degrees ER</li> </ul>
Suggested Therapeutic Exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AROM cervical, elbow, wrist and hand</li> <li>Pendelums</li> <li>Gripping exercises</li> <li>Scapular PNF</li> <li>Progress to full PROM all planes</li> <li>Supine AAROM for flexion (90 degrees), ER (40 degrees) and hyperextension.</li> <li>Submaximal RTC isometrics in neutral for IR, ER, EXT and ABD</li> </ul>
Cardiovascular Exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Treadmill, bike</li> </ul>
Progression Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>X-ray evidence of healing</li> <li>Full PROM</li> </ul>

### PHASE III (6-8 WEEKS)

DATES:

Appointments	Continue physical therapy 1-2 x/week
Rehabilitation Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restore full AROM</li> <li>Increase strength</li> </ul>
Precautions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allowed full PROM, AAROM and AROM without substitution</li> </ul>
Suggested Therapeutic Exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begin with supine AROM flexion, no weights; progress to weights</li> <li>Standing wand assisted flexion</li> <li>Pulleys with eccentric lowering of involved arm</li> <li>Progress all other AROM, supine first then standing</li> <li>PNF</li> </ul>
Cardiovascular Exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bike, treadmill, light jogging/swimming (if cleared by MD)</li> </ul>
Progression Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full AROM</li> </ul>

### PHASE IV (10+ WEEKS)

DATES:

## REHABILITATION GUIDELINES FOR PROXIMAL HUMERUS FRACTURE (NON-OPERATIVE)

Appointments	Continue physical therapy 1-2 x/week
Rehabilitation Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase RTC strength</li> <li>• Restore scapula-humeral rhythm</li> </ul>
Precautions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>
Suggested Therapeutic Exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Posterior capsule stretching if indicated</li> <li>• Isotonic exercises for RTC, scapular muscles</li> <li>• PNF</li> <li>• Theraband rows, ER, IR, shoulder extension</li> <li>• Progressive strengthening program using bands, light dumbbells for RTC, deltoid and scapula</li> <li>• Prone scapular strengthening (T's, Y's, W's)</li> <li>• Begin overhead exercises (if no impingement): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ball taps</li> <li>- Total Gym pull ups</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Cardiovascular Exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No restriction unless directed by MD</li> </ul>
Progression Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DC to HEP</li> </ul>

### References:

Godges, Joe, DPT, MA, OCS. Loma Linda University and University of Pacific Doctorate in Physical Therapy Programs. *Nonoperative and Postoperative Rehabilitation*. Retrieved from <https://xnet.kp.org>.

Kaar, Scott, M.D., Mitchell, William, M.D., Verry, Christian, M.D. St. Louis University Care Physician Group Department of Orthopedic Surgery Sports Medicine and Shoulder Service. *Proximal Humerus Fracture Nonoperative Protocol Prescription*. Retrieved from <http://www.slu.edu>.