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## Return to Work Shoulder Surgery: Major

*(Examples: Arthroplasty, RCR, Biceps Tenodesis, Labral Repair)*

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### Time: 0-4 Weeks Post-Operatively

- Off work 2-4 weeks post -op
- Driving may be resumed when patient is off narcotic pain medications and able to safely control their vehicle. Estimate is 2-4 weeks; however, this can vary from person to person.
- Rationale: Initially patients off work secondary to post-operative pain, narcotic usage and driving restrictions.
- Patients motivated to return to light duty earlier than 4 weeks are allowed to do so if transportation and work modifications can be made.

### Time: 4-12 Weeks Post-Operatively:

- Patients are able to return to work at 4 weeks post operatively at light duty with no use of operative arm.
- If patients are motivated and their job makes appropriate accommodations, an exception can be made to allow limited use of operative arm/hand.

### Time: 12-26 Weeks Post-Operatively:

- Work restrictions decreased as shoulder recovers:
- Restrictions 12 Weeks Post-Op:
  - No overhead use or use of affected arm away from body.
  - No lifting over 5 pounds.
  - No repetitive use.
  - Rest arm if pain develops and notify physician

- Restrictions 16 Weeks Post-Op:
  - Overhead use operative arm on an infrequent basis (<1 hour per day or 10 minutes per hour)
  - May lift up to 5 pounds occasionally (up to 2 hours per day or 20 minutes per hour) or 10 pounds on an infrequent basis.
  - Repetitive use of operative arm on an infrequent basis.
- Restrictions 20 Weeks Post-Op:
  - Overhead use of operative arm on an occasional basis
  - May lift up to 5 pounds frequently (up to 4 hours per day) or 10 pounds occasionally.
  - Repetitive use of operative arm on an occasional basis.

### Time: 6-9 Months Post-Operatively:

- Patients should be at MMI with the anticipation of RTW at full duty at the following time frames:
  - Light Physical Demand Occupation: 6 Months.
  - Medium Physical Demand: 7 ½ Months.
  - Heavy Physical Demand: 9 Months.
- If patient is unable to return to work at full duty as outlined above patient should be referred for functional capacity evaluation to determine permanent restrictions prior to MMI.
- Motivated patients with jobs with heavy physical demand jobs should be considered for a work conditioning program at 6 months post-operatively.