



Return to Work Shoulder Surgery: Standard

(Examples: Acromioplasty, Distal Clavicle Resection, Debridement, Capsular Release)

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: 4-8 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: 8-26 Weeks Post-Operatively:

- Work restrictions decreased as shoulder recovers:
- Restrictions 8 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 12 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 16 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: 5-7 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: 5 Months.
 - Medium Physical Demand: 6 Months.
 - Heavy Physical Demand: 7 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 5 months post-operatively.