

Acute AC Joint Stabilisation – Rehabilitation

Your AC Joint is being held back in its normal position by two surgical 'buttons' with strong suture material in between.

Whilst this repair is strong, returning to full activity requires your native ligaments to heal – the buttons just hold everything in the right spot so that the ligaments heal at the right length. These ligaments take 3-6 months to heal so your activities will be restricted to some degree during this period.



PHASE	WEEK	GOALS	INSTRUCTIONS
PHASE 1 PROTECT REPAIR & PREVENT STIFFNESS	Weeks 0-2	Pain control Protect repair	Sling for first 6 weeks Analgesia Physio education Elbow/wrist/hand exercises
	Weeks 2-6	Protect repair Prevent stiffness FF to 90, ER to 30	Sling for first 6 weeks Supine PROM and AAROM (FF 90, ER 30) Avoid abduction and adduction
PHASE 2 INCREASE ROM	Weeks 6-12	Achieve full ROM Regain fitness	Discontinue sling Progressive AAROM and AROM to full ROM Recommence running (ideally treadmill)
PHASE 3 STRENGTHENING & CONDITIONING	Months 3-4	Maintain full ROM Light strengthening	Progressive Theraband resisted exercises Graduated cuff and peri-scapular conditioning Full running program
	Months 4-6	Maintain full ROM Advance strengthening	Increased resistance exercises Consider return to manual/heavy duties Commence sports-specific training program
PHASE 4 RETURN TO FULL ACTIVITY	Months 6+	Gradual return to sport Prevent re-injury	Full activities as tolerated Return to competitive sport once strength symmetrical