

AC Joint Stabilisation

AC Joint Stabilisation surgery is performed for:

Acromioclavicular Joint (AC) dislocations

Milestones

Time after surgery	What you can expect from your shoulder
Week 6	Active elevation to pre-surgery level
Week 12	Minimum 80% range of external rotation compared to asymptomatic side Normal movement patterns throughout range

Return to functional activities

Activity	When you can expect to be able to do the activity
Return to work	Sedentary job: as tolerated Manual job: 3 months
Driving	6-8 weeks
Swimming	Breaststroke: 6 weeks Freestyle: 12 weeks
Lifting	Avoid lifting heavy items for 3 months, after then, as guided by your strength
Golf	3 months
Contact/High Impact Sports	3 months e.g. Rugby League, AFL, Martial Arts, Racket Sports, Surfing

Before Surgery

Pre-operative rehabilitation is advisable.

Rehabilitation Protocol

Some of the physiotherapy terms may be unfamiliar to you now. They will become clear as you work with your physiotherapist.

Time after surgery	Physiotherapy/Support
Day 1 to 3 weeks	<p>During the first three weeks you can expect to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wear a sling (athletes can wear off sooner under guidance of club therapist) • learn axillary hygiene • learn postural awareness and scapular setting <p>Be taught to perform the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • core stability exercises (as appropriate) • proprioceptive exercises (minimal weight bearing below 90 degrees) • active assisted flexion (as comfortable) • active assisted external rotation (as comfortable) • do not to force or stretch your shoulder
3 to 6 weeks	<p>During the next 3 weeks, you can expect to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wear off the sling at 6 weeks • progress active assisted to active ROM as comfortable • do not force or stretch or stretch your shoulder
6 to 12 weeks	<p>During the next 6 weeks, your physiotherapist will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regain scapula and glenohumeral stability working for shoulder joint control rather than range • gradually increase range of motion • strengthen your shoulder • increase your proprioception through open and closed chain exercise • progress core stability exercises • incorporate sports-specific rehabilitation • engage in plyometrics and perturbation training