

PHYSICAL THERAPY PROTOCOL

Clavicle Fracture — Open Reduction & Internal Fixation

Plate fixation of a mid-shaft or distal clavicle fracture

Plate fixation stabilizes the clavicle and allows early gentle shoulder motion. The arm is protected in a sling initially, motion is restored over the first 6 weeks, and strengthening waits until radiographic healing is confirmed.

General Precautions

- Sling for comfort ~2-4 weeks.
- Passive/active-assisted elevation limited to 90° for the first 2-4 weeks.
- No lifting, pushing, or bearing weight through the arm until union is confirmed (~6 weeks).
- Avoid overhead activity early.

Phase I — Protected Motion Weeks 0-2

Goals

- Control pain
- Protect the fixation
- Maintain adjacent joint motion

Precautions / Restrictions

- Sling except for exercise
- Elevation limited to 90°
- No lifting/overhead

Exercises & Interventions

- Pendulums
- Passive/active-assisted flexion and scaption to 90°
- Elbow, wrist, and hand motion
- Scapular setting
- Cryotherapy

Criteria to Advance

- Pain controlled
- Motion improving within limits

Phase II — Motion Weeks 2-6

Goals

- Restore full active motion
- Wean sling

Precautions / Restrictions

- No resisted strengthening / lifting

Exercises & Interventions

- Progress active range of motion to full in all planes
- Begin gentle scapular/cuff isometrics late

- Posture work

Criteria to Advance

- Full active motion
- Radiographs showing healing

Phase III — Strengthening Weeks 6-12

Goals

- Restore strength once healed

Precautions / Restrictions

- Strengthening begins after surgeon confirms healing

Exercises & Interventions

- Progressive rotator cuff, deltoid, and periscapular strengthening
- Overhead loading as tolerated
- Endurance work

Criteria to Advance

- Radiographic union
- Strength $\geq 80\%$ opposite side

Phase IV — Return to Activity Months 3-6

Goals

- Return to full activity, including contact sport

Exercises & Interventions

- Advanced strengthening and plyometrics
- Sport-/job-specific progression

Criteria to Advance

- Symmetric strength
- Return to contact/collision sport typically ~3-4 months with confirmed union

This protocol is a general guideline. Progression is criteria-based and may be advanced or slowed by Dr. O'Donnell based on intraoperative findings, tissue quality, fixation, and individual healing. Time frames are approximate. Direct questions to the office at (305) 393-8810.