

Accelerated Return from Pec Major Tendon Ruptures



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Cullan Ball has over 15 years experience in professional sport. Currently, he is Head Physiotherapist of the Western Sydney Wanderers FC. Prior to this, he was Head of Medical at Greater Western Sydney, Head Physiotherapist Cronulla Sharks and Melbourne Rebels and Physiotherapist at Essendon Football Club.

Quick Takeaways

- Aim to have weaned the athlete from the sling by weeks 2-3 under an accelerated protocol.
- Habitual running with arm swing may commence from 4 weeks.
- Surgical management is the most common treatment for complete rupture of the pec major tendon.
- The resumption of bench press in these athletes postoperatively should be used cautiously. Alternatively, performing a block press exercise is a recommended substitute.
- Under an accelerated protocol, contact retraining may begin around 8 weeks post-op if they have met initial strength markers.
- Given its similarities to the injury mechanism, the ASH-Test is a recommended assessment when analysing the athletes readiness to return to training.



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Key Learnings

1 The three most common mechanisms of injury are: hyperflexion + abduction, horizontal hyperextension and horizontal adduction.

2 Under an accelerated protocol, the athlete can return to sport approximately 12-14 weeks postoperatively assuming objective criteria have been achieved.

3 Prescribing low intensity isometrics, multiple times per day (x5-6) in the first 4 weeks can be highly beneficial for strength adaptation but not at the expense of physiological healing.