

## Distal Triceps Repair Physical Therapy Phases/Protocol

### 0-2 Weeks Post-Op: General Guidelines

- Patient will be in plaster splint in about 60 degrees of flexion to relax the repair — maintain sling and keep splint clean/dry until first postop visit. Formal physical therapy will NOT start until at least after first postop office visit

### Stage I: (Week 2-4):

- Patient fit with Hinged elbow brace, to be worn at all times (even while sleeping) except bathing/dressing/therapy exercises
- Splint/dressing removed at first postop visit — transitioned to hinged elbow ROM brace set at 0-90 degrees of flexion
- At first therapy visit — please teach patient home exercise program to be performed 5 times daily:
  - \*Passive self-assisted exercises: elbow extension, forearm pronation, forearm supination
  - \*Active assisted elbow flexion to 90 degrees until 4W postop mark
  - \*Hand, Wrist, Shoulder ROM to prevent stiffness

### Stage II: (week 4-8) Patient seen 2x/week

**Precautions: No full elbow flexion stretch until 8 weeks post-op  
No active triceps strengthening.**

- Begin elbow ROM exercises: full gradual passive extension allowed within patient tolerance
- Elbow flexion PROM to progress as follows:
  - Week 4 to 5: PROM to 75 degrees flexion
  - Week 5 to 6: PROM to 90 degrees
  - Week 6 to 7: PROM to 110 degrees
  - Week 7 to 8: PROM to 130 degrees, etc.
- Full elbow extension achieved by approximately 8 weeks post-op.
- Begin AROM biceps activity without resistance

### **Precautions table:**

#### **0 to 6 weeks:**

- \*Passive shoulder flexion limited to <90 deg
- \*No isolated triceps contraction with elbow OR shoulder extension

#### **0 to 12 weeks:**

- \* No resisted elbow or shoulder extensions/rows
- \* No weight bearing through the operative extremity (i.e. pushing open a door, pushing up from a chair , etc)

### Stage III: (week 8-12) Patient seen 1x/week

**Full elbow AROM and PROM should be achieved**

**\*No active triceps resistance until 12 weeks**

- Begin AROM bicep activity with light resistance; forearm pronation and supination isometrics
- Open-chain rotator cuff strengthening can begin with light weights

### Stage III: (Week 12 to 6 months Post-op): Patient seen as needed

**Goals for Discharge: Full strength of biceps, shoulder musculature**

- Gradual weight/theraband resistance training for triceps
- Closed-chain and co-contraction shoulder strengthening
- Gradual introduction of throwing activities and plyometrics as authorized per MD.

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