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POST-OPERATIVE REHABILITATION PROTOCOL

Distal Triceps Tendon Repair

0-First Post-Op Visit PROTECT THE REPAIR

- Sling and Splint all times
- At the first post-operative visit the splint and surgical dressing are removed, and the patients are placed in a hinged elbow ROM brace set at 0–90° flexion.

GOALS Splint per protocol

Week 1–6 PROTECTED MOTION

- Passive Self Assisted Elbow Extension
- Active Assisted Elbow Flexion to 90° x 6 weeks, then may progress to full flexion
- Passive Self Assisted Forearm Supination; passive self assisted forearm pronation
- Hand, Wrist, Shoulder ROM to prevent stiffness
- The elbow brace should be worn at all times with the sling attachment except to perform exercises, or dress and bathe with assistance until the 7th week after surgery. The brace is removed to perform exercises. Elbow extension should not be limited unless specifically indicated.
- Each set of stretching exercises should be done for 5 repetitions, holding each repetition for 10 seconds.
- Patients may shower during this time.
- Most patients should have greater than 90° elbow flexion arc motion for 6 weeks, depending upon the tightness of the repair.

GOALS No resisted extension

Week 7–8 ACTIVE MOTION

- Brace is discontinued; begin light active use. no aggressive or repetitious activity.
- Continued passive stretching to achieve full range of motion
- Begin active range of motion exercises elbow flexion and extension, and forearm supination, pronation
- Begin elbow flexion and extension and forearm pronation and supination isometrics.
- Continue passive stretching to achieve full range of motion

GOALS Progress to full motion



Week 12 STRENGTHEN

- Begin progressive resistive strengthening: theraband, theraTube, grip strengthening, and progress to weights.
- Continue passive stretches to achieve full range of motion. Note: If stiffness is noted, strengthening should be delayed.

GOALS Graduated loading

Week 12–26 (6 Months)

- Progressive gradual increase in resistance exercises and activities. Avoid overloading triceps muscle/tendon unit.

Return to Sport & Discharge Criteria

- Full elbow/forearm ROM; strength $\geq 90\%$ of opposite side
- Gradual return to heavy lifting or sport when cleared by Dr. Kelly

Time frames are guidelines — progress when phase goals are met, per Dr. Kelly and the treating therapist.