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PT Protocol: Distal Biceps Reconstruction

Week 0-2 – Maximum Protection Phase

- Precautions:
 - **Brace locked at 90° x 2 weeks**
 - PROM exercises to begin after 2 weeks and may be done in supine position using triceps to actively extend and lower elbow.
 - Grip exercises (rubber ball) ok
 - No resisted supination for 8 weeks
 - No resisted elbow flexion for 8 weeks
- Scar tissue mobilization, Grip exercises (rubber ball), ice, glenohumeral and scapulothoracic gentle motion (full)

Week 2-4 – Continued Maximum Protection

- PROM exercises – 30° - full flexion – only passive/gravity assisted ROM
- Brace must be locked at 90° except for when doing PROM exercises
- Continued scar tissue mobilization

Week 4-6 – Light Active Phase

- Progress to full PASSIVE elbow (0-full flexion) and wrist (supination) ROM
- Light stretching of biceps may be incorporated at first end-feel
- Brace remains locked at 90° except for when doing PROM exercises
- Goal: Full, pain free passive elbow ROM by week 6.

Week 6-8 weeks – Light Active Phase

- Begin Active elbow ROM in standing position
- Brace unlocked 30° - full flexion
- Goal: Full, pain free active elbow ROM by week 6.

Week 8-12 - Light Resistance

- Wean from brace
- Regain full AROM.
- Continued stretching with joint limitations or tissue limitation. Stretching to mid-range within tolerance
- If full active and passive ROM are achieved:
 - Begin light load resistance (do not combine elbow flexion and wrist supination) with high repetition
 - Lifting no greater than 5 lbs.
 - Isometric triceps sets

Week 12-16 – Ongoing Light Resistance

- Progress resistance up to 7.5 lbs. and no more than 10 lbs.
- Combination movements with 5 lbs.
- Optimize shoulder girdle mechanics, postural control

Week 16-20 – Increasing Resistance

- Progress to heavier load lifting (10-15 lbs) as tolerated per functional goals/needs
 - Isometric biceps exercises
 - Light isotonic biceps exercises:
 - Hammer, traditional, reverse grip curls
 - Rotator cuff & periscapular stabilizer exercises with resistance
 - Cardiovascular fitness: treadmill walking, elliptical, bike

Week 21+

- Return to full activity, preferred sport
 - Biceps curls as tolerated: Hammer, traditional, reverse grip, side curls
 - Sports specific exercises, triceps extensions, rotator cuff & periscapular stabilizer strengthening