



TWIN CITIES ORTHOPEDICS

Excellence in Research and Education

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ULNAR COLLATERAL LIGAMENT RECONSTRUCTION WITH AUTOGENOUS GRAFT REHABILITATION PROTOCOL

Phase 1: Immediate Postoperative Phase (1-3 Weeks)

Goals:

- Protect healing tissue.
- Decrease pain/inflammation.
- Retard muscular atrophy.

Week 1

Brace

- Posterior splint at 90 degrees elbow flexion.
- Elbow compression dressing (2-3 days).

Range of Motion

- Wrist active ROM extension-flexion.

Exercises

- Gripping exercises.
- Wrist ROM.
- Shoulder isometrics (no shoulder external rotation).
- Biceps isometrics.

Cryotherapy

Week 2

Brace

- Application of functional brace set at 30-100 degrees.

Exercises

- Initiate wrist isometrics.
- Initiate elbow flexion-extension isometrics.
- Continue all exercises listed above.

Week 3

Brace

- Advance brace 15-110 degrees (gradually increase ROM – 5 degrees extension and 10 degrees flexion/week).

Exercises

- Continue all exercises listed above.

Phase 2: Intermediate Phase (Weeks 4-8)

Goals

- Gradual increase in ROM.
- Promote healing of repaired tissue.
- Regain and improve muscular strength.

Week 4

Brace

- Functional brace set 10 – 120 degrees.

Exercises

- Begin light resistance exercises for arm (1 pound).
- Elbow extension-flexion.
- Progress shoulder programs emphasize rotator cuff strengthening (**avoid external rotation of shoulder until week 6**).

Week 6

Brace

- Functional brace set (0-130 degrees); active ROM (0-145 degrees without brace).

Exercises

- Progress to elbow strengthening exercises. (Refer to progressive resistance elbow exercises)
- Initiation shoulder external rotation strengthening.
- Progress shoulder program.

Phase 3: Advanced Strengthening Phase (Weeks 9-13)

Goals

- Increase strength, power, and endurance.
- Maintain full elbow ROM.
- Gradually initiate sporting activities.

Week 9

Exercises

- Initiate eccentric elbow flexion-extension.
- Continue isotonic program; forearm and wrist.
- Continue shoulder program – “Thrower’s Ten” Program.
- Manual resistance diagonal patterns.
- Initiate plyometric exercise program.

Week 11

Exercises

- Continue all exercises listed above.
- Begin light sport activities (e.g. golf, swimming).

Phase 4: Return to Activity Phase (Weeks 14-26)

Goals

- Continue to increase strength, power and endurance of upper extremity musculature.
- Gradual return to sport activities.

Week 14

Exercises

- Initiate interval throwing program (phase 1).
- Continue strengthening program.
- Emphasis on elbow and wrist strengthening and flexibility exercises.

Weeks 22-26

Exercises

- Gradual return to competitive throwing.

This protocol provides you with general guidelines for the rehabilitation of the patient undergoing ulnar collateral ligament reconstruction.

Specific changes in the program will be made by the physician as appropriate for the individual patient.

Questions regarding the progress of any specific patient are encouraged, and should be directed to Dr. Lervick at **952-456-7111**

REFERENCE:

Clinical Orthopaedic Rehabilitation, 2nd edition. SB Brotzman, KE Wilk. Mosby 2003.