

## Distal Biceps PT Protocol

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Splint for 5-7 days and then transition to hinged elbow bracing x 6 weeks
- Early limitations in elbow extension passive range of motion
- Avoid active elbow flexion and supination during the Phase I of rehab
- Gravity-assisted elbow flexion and extension begins 3 weeks post-operatively
- Isometric elbow extension, isotonic wrist flex/extension, and strengthening of shoulder girdle at post-op week 8
- Isometric bicep strengthening at post op-week 12
- Isotonic biceps strengthening at post op-week 16

### PHASE I (0 - 6 WKS)

#### Specific Instructions:

- Hand and wrist range of motion to begin immediately (no active elbow flexion and wrist supination)
- Passive range of motion of elbow from 90 degrees of flexion to further flexion as tolerated for 2 weeks then progress extension as tolerated along with bracing guidelines. No aggressive or painful passive range of motion to elbow
- No pushing, pulling or lifting to include transfers
- Wear elbow hinged brace x 6 weeks
  - Splint at 90 degrees for 5-7 days
  - 90-120 at 1 week
  - 60-120 at 2 weeks
  - 30-120 at 3 weeks
  - 20-120 at 4 weeks
  - 10-120 at 5 weeks
  - 0-120 at 6 weeks

#### Suggested Treatments:

- Wrist and hand active range of motion
- Passive elbow, forearm and wrist range of motion
- Gravity eliminated elbow flexion and extension allowed at week 3
- Cardiovascular fitness without UE use
- Shoulder girdle range of motion

#### Criteria to Advance to Next Phase:

1. Controlled post-operative pain and swelling
2. Full and pain-free range of motion expected by 6 weeks

## PHASE II (6 – 12 WEEKS):

### Specific Instructions:

- No lifting with operative extremity
- No active elbow flexion and supination

### Suggested Treatments:

- Isometrics triceps exercises begins at week 6
- Isotonic triceps strength exercises begin at week 8
- Strengthening of wrist flexion/extension and shoulder girdle begins at week 8

### Criteria to Advance to Next Phase:

1. Full and painless range of motion of the shoulder, elbow, wrist and hand
2. Proper scapulothoracic kinematics.

## PHASE II (12 WEEKS+):

### Specific Instructions:

- Increase strength
- Avoid compensations
- Return to sport/activity/work

### Suggested Treatments:

- Isometric biceps strengthening (week 12)
- Isotonic biceps strengthening (week 16)

### Exercise Examples:

- Isometrics/isotonic biceps strengthening
  - Traditional, hammer, and reverse forearm positioning
- Triceps isotonic extension
  - Cable pulley elbow extension
  - Bent-over triceps extension
- Rotator cuff and periscapular strengthening exercises
- Sport-specific activities
- Closed-chained UE stability activities
- Cardiovascular fitness – bike, elliptical with arm use, treadmill