

Distal Biceps Tendon Repair/Reconstruction Postoperative Rehab Protocol

REHAB PROTOCOL

Immediate Postoperative Phase: Weeks 0-2

Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the surgical site and ensure wound healing • Limit pain and inflammation
Splint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post operative splint to remain intact with 90 degrees of elbow flexion • Keep this clean, dry, and intact until the first postoperative appointment
Range of Motion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ok for wrist, hand, finger active range of motion
Strengthening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No formal strengthening • Gentle gripping exercises

Early Postoperative Phase: 2-6 weeks postoperative

Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the surgical repair • Limit pain and inflammation • Gradually increase range of motion
Brace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hinged elbow brace at all times
Range of Motion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elbow Extension-flexion arc in brace <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Week 2: 70- full flexion ○ Week 3: 50- full flexion ○ Week 4: 40- full flexion ○ Week 5: 20- full flexion ○ Week 6: brace open for full motion • Ok for active elbow extension • No active elbow flexion and forearm supination
Strengthening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotator cuff shoulder exercises with scapula strengthening • Gripping exercises

Gentle Strengthening Phase: 6-12 weeks postoperative

Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Protect the surgical repair• Ensure full elbow and forearm range of motion• Begin gradual strengthening for functional activities
Brace	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discontinue hinged elbow brace when directed by Dr. Schuette<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Typically at 6-8 weeks
Range of Motion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ok to begin active elbow flexion with forearm in supination, neutral, and pronation• Ok to begin active forearm supination
Strengthening	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At 6 weeks begin isometric triceps and biceps exercises• At 8 weeks progressive resistance for elbow and wrist strengthening using 1-3 pounds• At 10 weeks gradually increase resistance for elbow and wrist strengthening using 3-5 pounds

Progressive Strengthening Phase: 12+ weeks postoperative

Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Progress strengthening for functional activities• Return to work/light sports
Range of Motion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure full active and passive elbow and forearm ROM
Strengthening	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advance strengthening as tolerated if no delayed onset muscle soreness• Ok to begin light plyometrics at 16 weeks
Return to full sport and heavy labor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Typically full return to sport/heavy labor at 5-6 months• Dr. Schuette will discuss return to sport/heavy labor with patient

Please have physical therapist call Dr. Schuette's office with any questions: (952) 442-2163