

Epicondylitis Rehabilitation Protocol

PRECAUTIONS: **No elbow ROM for 3 weeks**
 Posterior splint at 90 degrees flexion with full pronation for 3 weeks
 Slow progression with supination, elbow extension & elbow flexion
 to protect LCL
 No weight bearing (CKC) exercises for 8-12 weeks
 No excessive flexion for 8 weeks

I. IMMEDIATE POST-OPERATIVE PHASE (0-3 weeks)

Goals: Protect healing tissue
 Decrease pain/inflammation
 Retard muscular atrophy
 Protect graft site – allow healing

Post-Operative Week 1

Brace: Posterior splint at 90 degrees elbow flexion
 and full wrist pronation to control wrist rotation (3-4wks)

Range of Motion: Begin gradual wrist ROM
 No ELBOW ROM
 Shoulder ROM

Elbow postoperative compression dressing (5-7 days)
Wrist (graft site) compression dressing 7-10 days as needed

Exercises:

- Gripping exercises
- Wrist ROM
- Shoulder isometrics (No Shoulder ER or IR)

Cryotherapy: To elbow joint and to graft site at wrist

Post-Operative Week 2-3

Exercises:

- Continue all exercises listed above
- Initiate shoulder ROM
- **NO ELBOW ROM**

Cryotherapy: Continue ice to elbow and graft site

Post-Operative Week 3:

Brace: Remain in immobilizer

Exercises:

- Continue all exercises listed above
 - Initiate active ROM shoulder;
 - Full can
 - Lateral raises
 - ER/IR tubing
- * no supination 3-6 wks**
- Initiate light scapular strengthening exercises
 - May incorporate bicycle for lower extremity strength & endurance

II. INTERMEDIATE PHASE (Week 4-7)

Goals: Gradual increase to full ROM
Promote healing of repaired tissue
Regain and improve muscular strength
Restore full function of graft site

Week 4

Brace: Elbow Hinged ROM Brace 30- 100 (gradual increase elbow flexion)

Exercises:

- Begin PROM with neutral or in pronation
- Begin light resistance exercises for arm (1 lb)
 - Wrist curls, extensions, pronation, supination
 - Elbow extension/flexion
- Progress shoulder program emphasize rotator cuff and scapular strengthening
- Initiate shoulder strengthening with light dumbbells

Week 5

ROM: Elbow ROM 30-125 degrees

Remain in ROM Brace

Continue all Exercises: Progress all shoulder and UE exercises (progress weight 1 lb.)

Week 6

AROM & PROM in Brace: 30-135 degrees

Exercises:

- Initiate Thrower's Ten Program
- Progress elbow strengthening exercises
- Initiate shoulder external rotation strengthening
- Progress shoulder program

Week 7

Brace: Discontinue Brace at end of Week 6
Progress to full ROM
Progress Thrower's Ten Program (progress weights)

III. ADVANCED STRENGTHENING PHASE (Week 8)

Goals: Increase strength, power, endurance
Maintain full elbow ROM
Gradually initiate sporting activities

Week 8

Exercises:

- Initiate eccentric elbow flexion/extension
- Continue isotonic program: forearm & wrist
- Continue shoulder program – Thrower's Ten Program
- Progress to isotonic strengthening program