

## **Distal Biceps Tendon Repair Protocol**

\* If the patient underwent a distal biceps tendon **reconstruction** using a graft, please consult with the office in regards to therapy modification. \*

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### **PHASE I (days 1-14)**

- Splint at 60° in neutral forearm rotation
- Use sling if needed
- Cryotherapy
- No PROM/AROM of elbow

#### **Goals:**

- Maintain repair integrity
- Keep splint clean and dry
- Reduce pain/swelling
- Monitor incision
- Prevent atrophy of shoulder, wrist, hand.

#### **Exercises:**

- Postural education
  - Periscapular, wrist and hand strengthening w/ elbow/forearm supported
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### **PHASE II (weeks 2-6)**

- Transition out of splint at first post-op visit
- Place into hinged elbow brace
  - Settings: lock out at 60° extension; allow full flexion 120°
    - Progress extension ROM settings 10°/week until full ROM is achieved.

#### **Goals:**

- Maintain repair integrity
- Avoid AROM/AAROM
- Reduce pain/swelling
- Enhance wound healing

#### **Exercises:**

- Increase PROM out of brace 10°/week as tolerated
  - Initiate triceps isometrics
  - Scar management & desensitization
    - Scar tissue massage weeks 4-6 increasing intensity.
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**PHASE III (weeks 6-8)**

- Discontinue hinged elbow brace

**Goals:**

- Return AAROM/AROM of elbow and forearm WNL
- Continue decreasing scar tissue

**Exercises:**

- Initiate elbow isometrics at 30°/60°/90°
  - Increase triceps strengthening
  - Initiate WB/CKC exercises
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**PHASE IV (weeks 8-12 and beyond)**

- Return strength to >85% of contralateral limb
- Return function to pre-morbid activity level

**Goals:**

- Gradually increase strength w/o any set backs
- Continue decreasing scar tissue

**Exercises:**

- Free weights; (starting at 5lbs., increase no more than 2.5-5lbs per week)
- Resistance Bands; (Focus on eccentric strengthening with light bands before increasing)
- CKC exercises for strength and stability
- Maintain elbow and forearm AROM WNL