



LATERAL ELBOW TENDON REPAIR POST-OPERATIVE GUIDELINES

Phase 1: Weeks 0-2

PRECAUTIONS

- Elbow in sling for comfort for up to two weeks
- Wrist immobilized by splint or brace per surgeon preference
- No passive range of motion (PROM) by clinician

TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Begin gentle PROM/active-assisted range of motion (ROM) of elbow/wrist/hand to be performed by patient
- Scapular isometrics
- Light compression to reduce edema
- Cryotherapy

CRITERIA FOR ADVANCEMENT

- 80% full elbow/wrist/hand AROM

EMPHASIZE

- Protect surgical repair
- Reduce irritation
- Control edema and pain
- Familiarize with post-operative plan of care



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Phase 2: Weeks 3-4

PRECAUTIONS

- No repetitive or maximal force gripping
- No lifting
- No progressive resistive exercises

TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Scar mobilization when completely healed
- Light PROM and stretching of wrist extensors with elbow at 90 degrees
- AROM of elbow/wrist/hand
- May begin submaximal isometrics at 3 weeks with elbow at 90 degrees of flexion
- Cryotherapy

CRITERIA FOR ADVANCEMENT

- No pain at rest
- Full pain-free AROM elbow/wrist/hand
- Well controlled edema

EMPHASIZE

- Functional activities
- Reduction of tissue irritability
- Control swelling
- Protect repair



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Phase 3: Weeks 5-8

PRECAUTIONS

- Avoid any painful exercises
- Avoid closed chain exercises

TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- PROM and stretching of wrist extensors
- AROM of elbow/wrist/hand
- Isometrics with elbow in extension
- Progressive resistance exercises of elbow flexion/extension, supination/pronation, wrist flexion, ulnar/radial deviation; start with elbow in 90 degrees of flexion and progress to elbow in extension
- Rotator cuff and scapular stabilization exercises with light resistance
- Grip strengthening
- Proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation (PNF) patterns with monitoring for compensatory movements
- Body blade or rhythmic stabilization exercises
- Cryotherapy
- May begin upper body ergometer (UBE)

CRITERIA FOR DISCHARGE

- Pain-free at rest and during exercise
- Pain-free gripping
- All upper extremity manual muscle testing graded 5/5

EMPHASIZE

- Upper extremity strength
- Upper extremity endurance
- Functional activities
- Wrist stabilization exercises



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Phase 4: Weeks 9+

PRECAUTIONS

- Avoid painful plyometrics
- Heavy resistance as tolerated

TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Soft tissue mobility as needed
- Scapular stabilization strengthening
- Advance isotonic for shoulder and elbow
- Begin shoulder external rotation (ER)/internal rotation (IR) strength at 90 degrees of shoulder abduction
- Advance wrist/forearm strengthening
- Continue PNF and eccentrics
- Advance closed-chain activities
- UBE
- Endurance progression o Double-hand overhead wall taps
 - Single-arm shoulder 90/90 wall taps
 - Single-arm 12 o'clock to 3 o'clock wall taps
 - Exercise blade in multiple positions
- Begin plyometrics (during 4-week period) o Double-hand chest pass
 - Double-hand overhead soccer pass
 - Double-hand chops
 - Single-hand IR at 0 degrees abduction
 - Eccentric catch
 - Single-hand shoulder 90/90 IR
- May begin tennis-related activities. Begin with bouncing ball on racquet and progress to volleying and ground strokes before serving
- May begin golf-related activities. Begin with chipping and putting progress to short irons and long irons before driver

CRITERIA FOR DISCHARGE

- Pain-free progression through interval sports program
- Independent with all arm care exercises

EMPHASIZE

- Initiation of interval sports program
- Return to sports participation