

## REHABILITATION GUIDELINES FOR DISTAL BICEPS TENDON REPAIR

### PHASE I (0-2 WEEKS)

DATES:

Appointments	MD appointment at (10-14 days) Begin physical therapy (5-7 days)
Rehabilitation Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decrease swelling</li> <li>• Pain control</li> <li>• Protection of repair</li> </ul>
Precautions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Splint/Brace locked at 90 degrees in neutral forearm position for 2-3 days</li> <li>• Patient will increase extension of brace and lock in place by 10 degrees every other day after surgery till full extension is gained.</li> <li>• Brace to be worn at all times</li> </ul>
Suggested Therapeutic Exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wrist AROM</li> <li>• Shoulder AROM (avoid excessive shoulder extension)</li> <li>• Isometrics for shoulder RC, triceps (sub-max)</li> </ul>
Cardiovascular Exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bike</li> </ul>
Progression Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pain and swelling under control</li> </ul>

### PHASE II (2-6 WEEKS)

DATES:

Appointments	Continue physical therapy (2x week)
Rehabilitation Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slow progression of elbow extension to full</li> <li>• Protection of repair</li> </ul>
Precautions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unlock brace for PROM 45 degrees starting week 2 then progress by 10 degrees each week till full extension is gained</li> <li>• No AROM biceps flexion x 6 weeks</li> <li>• Brace worn at all times even with ex's, removed for hygiene</li> </ul>

Suggested Therapeutic Exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active tricep extension in brace</li> <li>• Continue with isometrics in shoulder</li> <li>• PROM supination/pronation with elbow at 90 degrees flexion</li> </ul>
Cardiovascular Exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bike with brace on</li> <li>• Treadmill with brace on</li> </ul>
Progression Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full elbow PROM into flexion and extension</li> </ul>

PHASE III (6-12 WEEKS)

DATES:

Appointments	Continue physical therapy (1-2x week as needed)
Rehabilitation Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start strength phase progressing from AROM to light resistance training</li> <li>• Maintain full ROM in elbow</li> <li>• Postural control of UE with focus on scapular control/activation with movement of lower arm.</li> </ul>
Precautions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brace unlocked with AROM both directions 6 weeks</li> <li>• Remove brace at all times unless directed by surgeon 8 weeks</li> <li>• Start light resistance strength training for biceps week 8-12</li> </ul>
Suggested Therapeutic Exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Isometrics for biceps 6-8 weeks</li> <li>• Light progressive resistance ex's against gravity for biceps/triceps, supination/pronation 8-12 weeks</li> <li>• Add combined flexion/extension with supination/pronation motions</li> <li>• Continue with RC and scapular strength with resistance</li> <li>• UBE warm up</li> </ul>
Cardiovascular Exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UBE warm up</li> <li>• Bike</li> <li>• Walking outside on level terrain</li> </ul>
Progression Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full Pain free AROM</li> <li>• Independent HEP</li> </ul>

PHASE IV (12-20 WEEKS)

DATES:

Appointments	Continue physical therapy (1x week)
Rehabilitation Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return to full ADL's</li> <li>• Return to full recreational activity by 6 months unless directed by surgeon</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full strength through ROM</li> <li>• Add weights for upper body at 12 weeks, progress weight bearing</li> </ul>
Precautions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return to upper extremity sports at 6 months with clearance of MD</li> </ul>
Suggested Therapeutic Exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weight bearing UE core/postural ex's</li> <li>• Continued resistance training UE</li> <li>• Return to gym weighted workouts</li> </ul>
Cardiovascular Exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swimming</li> <li>• UBE, Bike, Treadmill, walking and hiking outside all allowed</li> </ul>
Progression Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return to sport for UE for high stress workloads or recreation such as climbing, throwing sports ect.</li> </ul>

References: Brigham and Women's Hospital Department of Rehabilitation Services

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