

Postoperative Rehabilitative Protocol for Elbow Arthroscopy

I. Initial Phase (Week 1)

Goal: Full wrist and elbow ROM, decrease swelling, decrease pain, retardation or muscle atrophy

A. Day of Surgery

Begin gently moving elbow in bulky dressing

B. Post-op Day 1 and 2

1. Remove bulky dressing and replace with elastic bandages
2. Immediate post-op hand, wrist, and elbow exercises
 - a. Putty/grip strengthening
 - b. Wrist flexor stretching
 - c. Wrist extensor stretching
 - d. Wrist curls
 - e. Reverse wrist curls
 - f. Neutral wrist curls
 - g. Pronation/supination

C. Post-op Day 3 through 7

1. PROM elbow ext/flex (motion to tolerance)
2. Begin PRE exercises with 1 lb weight
 - a. Wrist curls
 - b. Reverse wrist curls
 - c. Neutral wrist curls
 - d. Pronation/supination
 - e. Broomstick roll-up

II. Intermediate Phase (Week 2-4)

Goal: Improve muscular strength and endurance; normalize joint arthrokinematics

A. Week 2 Range of Motion exercises (overpressure into extension)

1. Addition of biceps curls and triceps extension
2. Continue to progress PRE weight and repetitions as tolerable

B. Week 3

1. Initiate biceps and biceps eccentric exercise program
2. Initiate rotator cuff exercises program
 - a. External rotators
 - b. Internal rotators
 - c. Deltoid
 - d. Supraspinatus
 - e. Scapulothoracic strengthening

III. Advanced Phase (Week 4-8)

Goals: Preparation of athlete for return to functional activities

*Criteria to progress to Advanced Phase:

1. Full nonpainful ROM
2. No pain or tenderness
3. Isokinetic test that fulfills criteria to throw
4. Satisfactory clinical exam

A. Weeks 4 through 6

1. Continue maintenance program, emphasizing muscular strength, endurance, & flexibility
2. Initiate Interval Throwing Program Phase