# POST-OPERATIVE REHABILITATION PROTOCOL FOLLOWING ULNAR COLLATERAL LIGAMENT RECONSTRUCTION USING AUTOGENOUS PALMARIS LONGUS GRAFT

## I. <u>IMMEDIATE POST-OPERATIVE PHASE</u> (0-3 weeks)

Goals: Protect healing tissue

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

## A. Post-Operative Week 1

Brace: Posterior splint at 90 degrees elbow flexion

Range of Motion: Wrist AROM ext/flexion immediately postoperative

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)

Biceps isometrics

Cryotherapy: To elbow joint and to graft site at wrist

## B. <u>Post-Operative Week 2</u>

Brace: Elbow ROM 25-100 degrees

(Gradually increase ROM – 5 degrees Ext/10 degrees of Flex per week)

Exercises: Continue all exercises listed above

Elbow Range of Motion in brace (30-105 degrees)

Initiate elbow extension isometrics Continue wrist ROM exercises

Initiate light scar mobilization over distal incision (graft)

Cryotherapy: Continue ice to elbow and graft site

#### C. <u>Post-Operative Week 3</u>

Brace: Elbow ROM 15-115 degrees

Exercises: Continue all exercises listed above

Elbow ROM in brace

Initiate active ROM Wrist and Elbow (No resistance)

Initiate light wrist flexion stretching

Initiate active ROM shoulder;

- -Full can
- -Lateral raises
- -ER/IR tubing
- -Elbow flex/extension

Initiate light scapular strengthening exercises

May incorporate bicycle for lower extremity strength & endurance

#### II. <u>INTERMEDIATE PHASE</u> (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

## A. Week 4

Brace: Elbow ROM 0-125 degrees

Exercises: 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

#### B. Week 5

ROM: Elbow ROM 0-135 degrees

Discontinue brace

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

## C. Week 6

AROM: 0-145 degrees without brace or full ROM

Exercises: Initiate Thrower's Ten Program

Progress elbow strengthening exercises Initiate shoulder external rotation strengthening

Progress shoulder program

#### D. Week 7

Progress Thrower's Ten Program (progress weights) Initiate PNF diagonal patterns (light)

## III. ADVANCED STRENGTHENING PHASE (Week 8-14)

Goals: Increase strength, power, endurance

Maintain full elbow ROM

Gradually initiate sporting activities

## A. Week 8

Exercises: Initiate eccentric elbow flexion/extension

Continue isotonic program: forearm & wrist

Continue shoulder program – Thrower's Ten Program

Manual resistance diagonal patterns Initiate plyometric exercise program (2 hand plyos close to body only)

-Chest pass

## -Side throw close to body Continue stretching calf and hamstrings

#### B. Week 10

Exercises: Continue all exercises listed above

Program plyometrics to 2 hand drills away from body

-Side to side throws -Soccer throws -Side throws

## C. Week 12-14

Continue all exercises

Initiate isotonic machines strengthening exercises (if desired)

-Bench press (seated)

-Lat pull down

Initiate golf, swimming

Initiate interval hitting program

# IV. RETURN TO ACTIVITY PHASE (Week 14-32)

Goals: Continue to increase strength, power, and endurance of upper extremity musculature

Gradual return to sport activities

## A. <u>Week 14</u>

Exercises: Continue strengthening program

Emphasis on elbow and wrist strengthening and flexibility exercises

Maintain full elbow ROM

Initiate one hand plyometric throwing (stationary throws)

Initiate one hand wall dribble

Initiate one hand baseball throws into wall

# B. <u>Week 16</u>

Exercises: Initiate interval throwing program (Phase I) [long toss program]

Continue Thrower's Ten Program and plyos Continue to stretch before and after throwing

## C. Week 22-24

Exercises: Progress to Phase II throwing (once successfully completed Phase I)

## D. Week 30-32

Exercises: Gradually progress to competitive throwing/sports