



ORTHOPEDIC ASSOCIATES OF LANCASTER, LTD

Dr. Alexandria O. Starks, MD
Shoulder & Elbow Surgery

REHABILITATION PROTOCOL: TRICEPS TENDON REPAIR

Phase I: Protect Repair (0 to 2 weeks after surgery)

- Elbow splinted in slight flexion for 2 weeks
- Keep splint clean and dry until removed at first postoperative visit (2 weeks)
- Sutures or staples removed at first postoperative visit
- Unrestricted wrist and digital motion initiated immediately.
- Edema management
 - Ice or cold flow systems encouraged for the first week at a minimum: should be used 3-4 times per day.
 - Elevation above heart level, compression glove/wrap

Phase II: Progress ROM & Protect Repair (2 to 6 weeks after surgery)

- Transition to hinged elbow brace at 2 weeks, with brace locked at 30-45 degs flexion
- Initiate exercise program 3 times per day after splint removed at week 2:
 - Gentle shoulder AROM (avoid combined elbow flex and end range shoulder elevation).
 - Isometric strengthening as needed for shoulder (IR/ER, abd and add only)
 - With use of template splint or in hinged brace:
 - Passive self-assisted elbow extension to full extension
 - Active elbow flexion (as allowed by template splint or hinged orthosis)
 - Passive forearm pronation and supination



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- If unable to achieve full passive elbow extension in this phase, lock brace in end range elbow extension at night.
- Brace locked until 6 weeks with gradual flexion AROM progression as follows:
 - Week 2: Active flexion to 45 degs
 - Week 3: Active flexion to 60 degs
 - Week 4: Active flexion to 90 degs
- No lifting with involved extremity. DO NOT push off with the surgical arm

Phase III: Progress ROM & Protect Repair (6 to 12 weeks after surgery)

- May discontinue brace for light use of affected UE during ADLs/IADLs in protected environments. Continue with brace wear outdoors, in unprotected environments and for sleeping. Ongoing avoidance of heavy lifting or painful activities.
- Advance elbow active ROM in all planes to tolerance.
- At 6 weeks post op can initiate hand, forearm, wrist and shoulder strengthening without stress to repair.
- At 8 weeks post op:
 - Begin passive elbow flexion if needed.
 - Discontinue hinged brace.
- 10-12 weeks post op: Begin elbow and forearm submaximal isometric exercises and gradually progress, avoiding resistance greater than 10 lbs.

Phase IV: Strengthening (3 months after surgery)

- Discontinue lifting restrictions.
- Gradual progressive strengthening in extension/flexion/supination/pronation
 - With MD clearance, progress gradual weight bearing (i.e. wall press ups, floor press ups, tricep dips, etc).
- Initiate progression to sports specific activities at 4 months.
- Return to sport at 5 months