

## Biceps Tendon Repair Rehabilitation Protocol

Kelly Holtkamp, M.D.

Please fax initial evaluation and progress notes to 815-381-7498.

### 0-14 Days Postoperative

- Do NOT remove the surgical bandage.
- Restrictions: No heavy lifting or pulling greater than 0 lbs. No driving.
- Perform range of motion of the hand and shoulder to prevent stiffness and reduce swelling.

### 10-14 Days Postoperative

- The surgical bandage is removed at Dr. Holtkamp's office.
- While at Dr. Holtkamp's office the patient will be fitted with a hinged elbow brace with the extension blocked at 60 degrees.
- The hinged elbow brace is to be worn at all times. The brace may be removed for hygiene purposes and to perform the exercise program.
- Instruct the patient to begin range of motion exercises:
  - Active-assisted elbow flexion 60 to 130 degrees (full flexion).
  - Active-assisted elbow extension 130 (full flexion) to 60 degrees.
- The therapist will educate the patient on anti-edema management. This includes, but not limited to, self-retrograde massage, cold therapy, and extremity elevation. The anti-edema management will continue for several weeks.

### 3 Weeks Postoperative

- The therapist will begin scar tissue management to decrease sensitivity and density, which could include ultrasound and/or silicone gel pads per the therapist's discretion. The scar tissue management will continue for several weeks.

### 4 Weeks Postoperative

- The hinged elbow brace extension block is decreased to 40 degrees.
- Instruct the patient to begin putty exercises to improve hand strength.
- The range of motion exercises are increased 40 to 130 degrees (full flexion).

### 6 Weeks Postoperative

- The hinged elbow brace extension block is decreased to 20 degrees.
- The range of motion exercises are increased 20 to 130 degrees (full flexion).

### 8 Weeks Postoperative

- The hinged elbow brace is discontinued.
- Instruct the patient to begin active range of motion exercises of the elbow.

### 10 Weeks Postoperative

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- Instruct the patient to begin strengthening exercises starting with mid-range isometrics, then isotonic concentric contractions, and finally, progress to eccentric muscle contractions.

### **12 Weeks Postoperative**

- Instruct the patient to continue their home exercise program for range of motion and strengthening.
- If the patient has not achieved functional range of motion and strength, then continue with occupational therapy for an additional 2-4 weeks.

### **16 Weeks Postoperative**

- The patient may resume normal activities of daily living as tolerated.
- Work status: The patient is allowed to return to full duty status if the job requirements have been met. If not met, then a functional capacity evaluation and work hardening program may be recommended.
- The healing process can take up to a full year. Therefore, it is advised to continue with the home exercise program until goals have been met.

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