

Postoperative Rehabilitation for Elbow Arthroscopy

Phase I – Immediate Postoperative Phase (Week 1)

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

Day of Surgery

Begin gently moving elbow in bulky dressing

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
 - h. A/AAROM elbow extension/flexion

Post-op Day 3 through 7

1. PROM elbow extension/flexion (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

Phase II – Intermediate phase (Week 2-4)

Goal: Improve muscular strength and endurance; normalize joint arthrokinematics

Week 2 ROM exercises (overpressure into extension)

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

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

Phase 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

Weeks 4 through 6

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