Jennifer Thomson, MD
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY | SPORTS MEDICINE

Rehabilitation Protocol: Distal Triceps Tendon Repair

Phase I: 0-2 weeks

- Brace: splint at 30 degrees & neutral rotation full time
- ROM: no elbow ROM; okay for gentle shoulder, wrist, digit ROM
- Weightbearing: Non-weightbearing
- Strengthening: None

Phase II: 2-6 weeks

- Brace: Hinged elbow brace. Wear at all times including exercise. Can remove for hygiene
- ROM: Active flexion to 30 deg in brace (depending on repair tension) with goal to progress to 90 deg by week 6
> NO ACTIVE ELBOW EXTENSION
> Continue wrist and shoulder ROM
- Weightbearing: Non-weightbearing
- Strengthening: none
- Exercises: gentle joint mobilization

Phase III: 6-9 weeks

- Brace: Wean out of hinged elbow brace when ROM is full
- ROM: advance active flexion to get to full flexion motion by week 9
> Continue wrist and shoulder ROM
- Weightbearing: Non-weightbearing
- Strengthening: none of elbow; begin rotator cuff/deltoid isometrics
- Exercises: active flexion in brace. Initiate AAROM pronation and supination. Isometric biceps exercises pain free

Phase IV: 9-12 weeks

- Brace: none
- ROM: gently advance ROM to tolerance
- Weightbearing: gradually increase as tolerated
- Strengthening: begin triceps isometrics; then begin active flexion and extension against gravity; resistive strengthening for deltoid/rotator cuff
- Exercises: maintain flexibility/ROM

Phase V: 12 weeks-6 months

- Brace: none
- ROM: return to full and pain free ROM
- Weightbearing: as tolerated
- Strengthening: begin gentle flexion/extension strengthening, advance gradually as tolerated

Phase VI: 6+ months

- Brace: none
- ROM: return to full and pain free ROM
- Weightbearing: as tolerated
- Activity: return to full activity
- Functional activities and sport-specific demands
- Return to sport after clearance by MD

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