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## **DISTAL BICEPS REPAIR (AGGRESSIVE)**

### **Phase I:**

#### Goals

- Elbow ROM from 30° of extension to 120° of flexion
- Maintain minimal swelling and soft tissue healing
- Achieve full forearm supination/pronation

#### 1-3 weeks

- ROM:
  - Maintain Bilateral elbow and forearm PROM/AAROM Exercises
    - ◇ Six times per day the patient should set his IROM hinged brace at 30° of extension and 120° of flexion and perform active assistive flexion and active extension exercises within the brace. Two sets of 10 are performed.
    - ◇ The brace is then reset at 90°, the forearm straps are loosened, and the patient performs 2 sets of 10 forearm rotations. The straps should then be secured.
    - ◇ Ice after exercise, 3-5 times per day
    - ◇ A sling should be worn only as needed for comfort with the patient maintaining full shoulder ROM.

### **Phase II:**

#### Goals

- Full elbow and forearm ROM by 6 weeks
- Scar management
- Testing
  - Bilateral elbow and forearm ROM
  - Grip strengthening at 5-6 weeks

#### 3-6 Weeks

- Exercises
  - 3 weeks:
    - ◇ The extension limit in the brace is changed to 20°. Flexion remains at 120°, but patient may remove brace to allow full flexion 2 times per day. The brace stays on at all other times except when washing the arm.
    - ◇ Scar massage 3-4 times per day.

- 4 weeks:
  - ◇ Extension limit is changed to 10°.
  - ◇ Continue the same exercises.
  - ◇ Putty may be used 3 times per day for 10 minutes to improve grip strength.
- 5 weeks:
  - ◇ The extension limit is changed to 0° and exercises are continued in the brace.
- 6 weeks:
  - ◇ The brace is discontinued, unless needed for protection.
  - ◇ Passive elbow extension exercises are initiated if needed.
  - ◇ Light strengthening exercises are initiated with light tubing or 2-3 pound weights for elbow flexion, extension, forearm rotation and wrist flexion and extension.
  - ◇ Ice is continued after strengthening exercises.
- Clinical Follow-up
  - ◇ The patient usually is seen at 3 weeks and at 5-6 weeks, then only as needed with doctor appointments, until full motion is achieved and to monitor the patient's strengthening program.

### **Phase III:**

#### Goals

- The strengthening program is gradually increased so that the patient is using full weights by 3 months. It may be as long as 6 months before a patient returns to heavy work.
- Testing
  - Grip strengthening
  - Elbow ROM

#### 6 Weeks to 6 Months

- Exercises
  - Elbow ROM exercises are performed if ROM is not WNL
  - Strengthening exercises to wrist, elbow, forearm, and possibly shoulder depending on sport and/or work requirements