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Post-Operative Rehabilitation Guidelines for
Distal Triceps Tendon Repair

Phase I: Protect Repair (0 to 2 weeks)

- Precautions
 - Elbow immobilized in posterior splint at 60° elbow flexion for 1st 2 weeks
 - No active elbow extension 6 weeks
- ROM
 - Gradual ↑ Active /Passive ROM of shoulder in all planes while in splint
 - Wrist /hand /finger full AROM in splint
- Strength
 - Scapular retractions
 - Shoulder shrugs
- Modalities
 - Hot pack before treatment
 - E-stim, TENS as needed ○ Ice 10–15 minutes after treatment
- Goals of Phase I
 - Control pain and inflammation
 - Protect repair
 - Independent in HEP

Phase II: Progress Protected ROM and Function (3–6 weeks)

- Precautions
 - Elbow placed in a hinged ROM brace allowing 30°–60°
 - Brace to be worn at all times except during exercise or bathing
 - *Passive* ROM ONLY for elbow extension
- ROM
 - Hinged Brace Range of Motion Progression (ROM progression may be adjusted base on Surgeon’s assessment of the surgical repair .)
 - Week 2–3: 30°–60°
 - Week 4–5: 15°–90°
 - Week 6–7: 10°–110°
 - Week 8: 0°–125°
 - Forearm: Initiate AAROM pronation and supination
 - Progress to active pronation and supination (wk 4)
 - Shoulder AROM as needed in brace
- Strength (in brace)

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- Isometric shoulder exercises
- Supine /standing rhythmic stabilizations
- Wrist /hand: grip strengthening
- Standing flexion and scaption
- Side-lying ER o Isometric biceps pain free (week 6)
- Manual
 - Scar mobilization
 - Passive elbow extension
 - Joint mobs as needed
- Modalities
 - Heat /hot pack before therapy
 - US to incision as needed
 - Ice 10-15 minutes
- Goals of Phase II
 - Protection of repair
 - Gradual increase in ROM
 - Initiate strengthening to surrounding tissues
 - Improve scapular stability

Phase III: Reach full ROM (7-12 weeks)

- ROM
 - Week 8 progress to full ROM of elbow; discontinue brace if adequate motor control
 - Initiate UBE light resistance
 - Exercises
 - Ball roll outs on table
 - Wall walk
 - Pulley
- Strength
 - Tricep/elbow extension progression
 - 6 weeks: initiate AROM
 - 8 weeks: initiate light Theraband resistance
 - Theraband IR/ER shoulder
 - Theraband bicep extension
 - Prone dumbbell Therex
 - Rhythmic stabilization
- Manual
 - Passive elbow extension if lacking

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- Joint mobs as needed to regain full flexion
- Week 10: Passive or contract relax to gain full flexion if still lacking

Phase IV: Full ROM and Strength (>12 weeks)

- Strength
 - Progress strengthening program with increase in resistance and high speed repetition
 - Bicep curls with dumbbells
 - Initiate IR/ER exercises at 90° abduction
 - Progress rhythmic stabilization activities to include standing PNF patterns with tubing
 - Initiate plyotoss – double arm progress to single arm
 - Initiate sport specific drills and functional activities
 - Initiate interval throwing program week 16-20
 - Initiate light upper body plyometric program week 16-20
 - Progress isokinetics to 90° abduction at high speeds
- Modalities
 - Ice 15-20 minutes
- Goals of Phase IV
 - Full painless ROM
 - Maximize upper extremity strength and endurance
 - Maximize neuromuscular control
 - Optimize shoulder mechanics/kinematics
 - Optimize core stability
 - Initiate sports specific training/functional training