
ELBOW TENDON RELEASE
POSTOPERATIVE PROTOCOL
Referral for Rehabilitation Services

Patient Name: _____ Date of Surgery: _____
_____/ Week _____ Weeks

DAYS 1-7

1. Keep elbow in splint the majority of the time for the first 48 hours.
2. Sleep on your back, if possible, with the arm up on a pillow either on your stomach or on your side.
3. Be sure to maintain full shoulder motion. Move your shoulder through the full range of motion several times each day.
4. **Starting day 1:** begin moving your fingers and wrist for 2 minutes, 3-5 times a day.
5. You may shower on the third day after surgery: remove bandages, gently work the elbow in the shower. After showering, gently air or blow dry the wound and apply antibiotic ointment. Cover the wound with Band-Aids or gauze.
6. **Day 3-6:** wear the immobilizer for protection, remove for shower and at times for limbering the elbow. Perform wrist stretching exercises 4-6 times a day.
7. Ice several times a day for 10 - 20 minutes at a time if pain or swelling persists.

DAYS 7-17

1. Begin limbering elbow more aggressively with bending and straightening motions. Start in warm shower, but continue exercises outside of the shower as well.
2. **By day 17** about 80% of elbow motion return is average. If not, check with your M.D. or therapist.
3. Continue working on moving the wrist, fingers, and forearm several times a day.
4. Use arm for light activities.
5. Use immobilizer occasionally for protection only. Leave immobilizer off the majority of the time.
6. Use counter-force brace for activities such as typing, light lifting or house work.

DAYS 18-21

1. Use counter-force brace with exercising.
2. Begin squeezing the eggercizer, a nerf ball or sponge (Do not use a tennis or racquet ball)
3. Actively bend and straighten elbow through the fullest possible range.

4. Begin tennis elbow exercise protocol but start with only 5 repetitions and slowly progress as able.

The tennis elbow exercise program is designed to progressively strengthen but no overly stress the muscles involved. Mild muscular soreness and/or fatigue following exercise is normal. Ice may be utilized to help control discomfort

Tennis Elbow Program (May use bands or hand weights):

- Wrist Curls
- Wrist Extensions
- Forearm supination
- Forearm pronation

3 WEEKS

1. Continue to progress the elbow exercise protocol, including adding light weights when you can do 3 sets of 10 repetitions (per protocol).
2. Use counter-force brace with comfortable tension for exercises.
3. Increase use of arm over 3-6 week period for normal activities.
4. Partial relief of pre-surgery pain is usually noted in the 3-6 week period.
5. Maintain as high a level of aerobic activity as you did preoperatively (walking, jogging etc.). Use the counter-force brace during strenuous activities. If you note increased pain you may have over stressed the arm:
6. Use ice as needed for 10-20 minutes to relieve pain.
7. Decrease your activity level, and progress more slowly.

6-8 WEEKS

1. Begin gentle sport specific training- chip, putt, hit tennis ball against wall
2. Resume regular weight lifting program as tolerated
3. Continue tennis elbow exercise program

Return to Activities:

Golf: 8 weeks chip and putt/ 4 months full game
Tennis: 8 weeks ground strokes/ 4-5 months full game

I hereby certify these services as medically necessary for the patient's plan of care.

Physician's Signature

Date_____