

Distal Biceps Repair Rehabilitation Protocol

- **Weeks 0-2**
 - Remain in splint; elevate, ice, pain control as needed
- **Weeks 2-6**
 - Goals: prevent stiffness, decrease swelling/inflammation, and protect fixation
 - Splint removed and begin wearing hinged elbow brace; wear around the block except for hygiene and when working with therapy
 - Brace initially set at 90 degrees to full flexion; increase extension by 10-15 degrees per week; thus goal at 6 weeks is 45 deg to full flexion, goal at 12 weeks 0 deg (fully straight) to full flexion
 - Ultimately it is common to have less motion on surgical side, particularly in extension; functional elbow ROM is 30-130 which is the minimal acceptable outcome following surgery
 - Okay to begin passive, active-assist, and active supination and pronation
 - No weighted elbow flexion or supination until 12 weeks
 - Okay for shoulder exercises, scapular strengthening, wrist flexors/extensors, and gripping exercises
 - Modalities as needed for muscle stimulation, pain control, swelling control
- **Weeks 6-12**
 - Goals: improved swelling and pain, increase ROM
 - Continue to progress ROM, with goal of 0 deg (fully straight) to full flexion by 12 weeks
 - Okay to discontinue use of brace once functional ROM obtained (30-130 deg)
 - Continue to progress supination and pronation
 - Continue no weighted elbow flexion or supination until 12 weeks
 - Okay for shoulder, scapula, triceps, wrist flexors/extensors, and grip exercises and strengthening
 - Emphasize importance of home exercise program
 - Modalities as needed for muscle stimulation, pain control, swelling control
- **Weeks 12+**
 - Goals: strengthening, return to work, sport, and/or pre-injury functional level with minimal to no restrictions
 - Begin weighted/resisted biceps program (elbow flexion and supination); begin light with slow progression
 - Avoid any sudden, heavy, or dramatic increase in biceps activity
 - Work on improving functional/ADL tasks as needed
 - Functional/work-specific/sport strengthening and training, if applicable
 - Customized HEP to continue once PT/OT is completed

