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## Post-Operative Rehabilitation Following Elbow Arthroscopy

### **Phase I: Immediate Motion Phase**

A hinged elbow brace is used for the 1<sup>st</sup> 3 weeks only in patients who undergo drilling of OCD lesions, but no motion restrictions are set on the brace. The brace is intended to apply slight varus stress and off-load the capitellum.

#### *Goals:*

- Improve/regain full range of motion
- Decrease pain/inflammation
- Retard muscular atrophy

#### **A. Day 1-4:**

- Range of motion to tolerance (flexion/extension and supination/pronation)
- Wrist flexion/extension stretches
- Gripping exercises (putty).
- Isometrics elbow flexion/extension
- Compression dressing, ice 4-5 times daily

#### **B. Day 5-10:**

- Range of motion exercises to tolerance
- Joint mobilization to reestablish range of motion
- Wrist flexion/extension stretches
- Continue isometrics
- Continue use of ice, compression to control swelling

#### **C. Day 11-14:**

- Range of motion exercises to tolerance
- Continue joint mobilization techniques
- Initiate light dumbbell progressive resistance exercise program: Biceps, triceps, wrist flexion/extension, forearm pronation/supination
- Continue use of ice post-exercise

## **Phase II: Intermediate Phase**

### *Goals:*

- Improve strength/power/endurance
- Increase range of motion
- Initiate functional activities

**Restrictions IF drilling of OCD lesion is performed: No valgus stress activities x 4 months\*\*\***

### **A. Week 2-5:**

- Full range of motion exercises (4-5 times daily)
- Continue progressive resistance exercise program for elbow and wrist musculature
- Initiate shoulder program
- Continue joint mobilization
- Continue ice post-exercise

### **B. Week 5-9:**

- Continue all exercises listed above
- Initiate light upper body program
- Continue ice post-exercise

### *Criteria to enter Phase III:*

- Full non-painful ROM
- Strength > 75% of contralateral side
- No pain or tenderness

## **Phase III: Advanced Strengthening Program**

**Restrictions IF drilling of OCD lesion is performed: No valgus stress activities x 4 months\*\*\***

### *Goals:*

- Improve strength/power/endurance
- Gradual return to functional activities

### **A. Week 10-12:**

- Continue progressive resistance exercise program for elbow and wrist
- Continue shoulder program
- Continue stretching for elbow/shoulder
- Initiate interval throwing program and gradual return to sport activities (UNLESS drilling of OCD lesion is performed)

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If drilling of OCD lesion is performed, avoid all valgus stress activities x 4 months.  
May begin plyometric strengthening exercises at Week 16 for 2 weeks.  
If no symptoms with plyometric exercises, may begin throwing program at Week 18.  
Goal: Return to unrestricted throwing by 6 months and pitching between 6 and 9 months.