

Lateral Epicondylitis Debridement/Repair REHAB Protocol

PHASE I – (Days 1-7)

- Position extremity in a sling for comfort
- Control edema and inflammation: apply ice for 20 mins 2-3 times a day
- Gentle hand, wrist, and elbow ROM exercises. Exercises should be done in a pain free ROM
- Active shoulder ROM
- Periscapular exercises
- Patient should minimize the frequency of any activities of daily living that stress the extensor tendon mechanism such as lifting, and combined joint movements (i.e full elbow extension with wrist flexion).
- When lifting and/or performing activities with the surgical upper extremity it is advised to have the patient perform such tasks with their palm up to minimize work load on the extensor tendons. Consider pre-fab/custom wrist splint to minimize wrist extension activity if patient is acutely painful with such activities
- Elbow pad for protection of incision site
- Education on work/activity modification

PHASE II – (Weeks 2-4)

- Begin PROM. PROM should be continued and combined with AAROM within end-range of patient's pain tolerance
- Gentle strengthening exercises with AROM and sub maximal isometrics
- Edema and inflammation control: continue with ice application. Tubigrip as needed
- Scar management as needed
- Continue work/activity modification education

PHASE III – (Weeks 5-7)

- Discontinue sling/wrist brace
- Advance strengthening as tolerated to include weights or theraband. Focus should be on endurance training of wrist extensors (i.e light weights, higher repetitions per set)
- ROM with continued emphasis on restoring full A/PROM
- Edema and inflammation control with ice application for 20 mins after activity
- Modified activities in preparation for beginning functional training
- Gentle massage along and against fiber orientation
- Counterforce bracing to common extensor tendon of forearm (including education on proper use to avoid nerve compression)

PHASE IV – (Weeks 8-12)

- Continue counterforce bracing to complete ADLs and or strengthening pain free
- Begin task specific functional training
- Return to higher-level work/recreational activities