

Distal Biceps Tendon Repair – Rehabilitation Protocol

Fixation achieved with Biceps button and Tenodesis screw (see video on <https://youtu.be/n2Yut-0I2oU>)

Initial Post-Operative Immobilisation

- Posterior splint, elbow immobilization at 90° for 5-7 days with forearm in neutral (unless otherwise indicated by surgeon).

Hinged Elbow Brace

- Elbow placed in a hinged ROM brace at 5-7 days post-operative. Brace set unlocked at 45° to full flexion.
- Gradually increase elbow ROM in brace (see below).

Hinged Brace ROM Progression

(ROM progression only may be adjusted based on surgeon's assessment of the surgical repair)

Week 2	45° to full elbow flexion
Week 3	45° to full elbow flexion
Week 4	30° to full elbow flexion
Week 5	20° to full elbow flexion
Week 6	10° to full elbow flexion
Week 8	Full ROM of elbow; discontinue brace if adequate motor control

ROM Exercises (to above brace specifications)

Week 2-3

- Passive ROM for elbow flexion and supination (with elbow at 90°)
- Assisted ROM for elbow extension and pronation (with elbow at 90°)
- Shoulder ROM as needed based on evaluation, avoiding excessive extension

Week 3-4

- Initiate active-assisted ROM elbow flexion
- Continue assisted extension and progress to passive extension ROM

Week 5

- Active ROM elbow flexion and extension

Week 6-8

- Continue program as above
- May begin combined / composite motions (i.e. extension with pronation)
- If at 8 weeks post-op the patient has significant ROM deficits, therapist may consider more aggressive management, after consultation with referring surgeon, to regain ROM.

Strengthening Program

Week 1	Sub-maximal pain free isometrics for triceps and shoulder musculature
Week 2	Sub-maximal pain free biceps isometrics with forearm in neutral
Weeks 3-4	Single plane active ROM elbow flexion, extension, supination and pronation
Week 8	Progressive resisted exercise program is initiated for elbow flexion, extension, supination and pronation

Progress shoulder strengthening program

- Weeks 12-14: May initiate light upper extremity weight training
- Non-athletes initiate endurance program that stimulates desired work activities / requirements

UPDATED Dr Simon Hutabarat (3/3/2021)