

Post-Op Rehabilitation Protocol: Elbow Lateral Collateral Ligament Reconstruction

Precautions

- Dependent on status of reconstruction and surgeon preference
- No elbow ROM for 2–3 weeks
- Posterior orthosis at 90 degrees flexion with full pronation for 2–3 weeks
- Slow progression of supination, elbow extension and elbow flexion
- A/PROM to protect LCL
- Avoid full elbow extension combined with supinated forearm for up to 16 weeks
- No weight-bearing (CKC) exercises for at least 8–16 weeks
- No excessive flexion for 8–12 weeks
- Unrestricted activity, including sports-specific skills, may be limited for 9 months.

I. Immediate Postoperative Phase (0–3 Weeks)

Goals: Protect healing tissue Decrease pain and inflammation Retard muscle atrophy
Protect graft site to allow healing

A. Postoperative Week 1

Brace: Posterior orthosis at 90 degrees elbow flexion and full forearm pronation to control forearm rotation (3–4 weeks)

ROM: Begin gradual wrist ROM

No elbow ROM

Shoulder ROM with brace/orthosis on

Elbow postoperative compression dressing (5–7 days) Wrist (graft site) compression dressing 7–10 days as needed Exercises: Gripping exercises

Wrist ROM

Shoulder isometrics (no shoulder ER or IR) Cryotherapy: To elbow joint and to graft site at wrist

B. Postoperative Week 2–3

Exercises: Continue all exercises listed above Initiate shoulder ROM

No elbow ROM

Cryotherapy: Continue ice to elbow and graft site

C. Postoperative Week 3

Brace: Remain in orthosis

Exercises: Continue all exercises listed above

- Initiate active ROM shoulder: Full can
- Lateral raises ER/IR tubing
- No forearm supination beyond neutral for 3–6 weeks
- Initiate light scapular strengthening exercise
- May incorporate bicycle for lower extremity strength and endurance

II. Intermediate Phase (Week 4–6)

Goals: Gradual increase to full ROM Promote healing of repaired tissue Regain and improve muscle strength
Restore full function of graft site

A. Week 4

Brace: Elbow hinged brace 60–100 (gradually increase elbow flexion and increase extension 15 degrees at 2 week intervals)

Exercises: Begin ROM with neutral or pronated forearm Begin light resistance exercise for arm (1 lb)

Wrist curls, extension Elbow extension–flexion

Progress shoulder program emphasize rotator cuff and scapular strengthening Initiate shoulder strengthening with light resistance

B. Week 5

ROM: Elbow ROM 45–125 degrees Remain in hinged elbow brace

Continue all exercises: Progress all shoulder and upper extremity exercises (progress weight 1 lb)

C. Week 6

ROM in brace: 30–145 degrees

Exercises: Initiate forearm supination ROM from neutral Initiate Thrower's Ten Program

Progress elbow strengthening exercises

Initiate shoulder external rotation strengthening Progress shoulder program

D. Week 7

Brace: Discontinue brace at weeks 6–8 Progress to full elbow ROM

Progress Thrower's Ten Program (progress weights)

III. Advanced Strengthening Phase (Week 8)

Goals: Increase strength, power, endurance

Maintain full elbow ROM

Gradually initiate sporting activities

A. Week 8

Brace: Discontinue hinged brace by end of week

8 Exercises: Initiate eccentric elbow flexion–extension Continue isotonic program: forearm and wrist Continue shoulder program—

Thrower's Ten Program Progress to isotonic strengthening program

Protocol Modifications: