Fraser Orthopaedic Institute
Physiotherapy Protocols
403 - 233 Nelson's Crescent New Westminster BC V3L0E4

Distal Biceps Tendon Rupture: Postoperative Protocol

Initial Evaluation (Two Weeks Post-Op)
GOALS:
1. Abbreviated Evaluation
    - Assess for edema.
    - Assess incision site.

2. Fit elbow hinge splint blocking at 75° extension to prevent active extension.

3. Instruct patient in home exercise program of passive elbow flexion/extension within splint as well as passive supination/pronation with elbow flexed to at least 90°.

4. Educate patient regarding precautions.

If patient presents with the following **Self-Management Criteria**, place on a home exercise program.

- No limitation of range of motion of elbow and forearm within splint boundaries;
- Minimal to no pain at rest;
- Apparent adherence to precautions;

If patient does not meet above criteria, then a course of formal rehabilitation will be initiated 2-3 times per week until above criteria has been met.

Patient to increase extension of splint weekly. Elbow extended by 15° weekly and continues to be extended progressively until full extension is achieved by 8 weeks post-operatively.

Treatment Guidelines:
Week 8
- Splint is discontinued.
- Active flexion is begun within splint.
- Continue with previous exercises.

Week 10
- Full active range of motion exercises.

Week 12
- Upper extremity strengthening is begun as appropriate.

Week 16
- Full use is allowed.