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## **Distal Triceps Repair Rehab Protocol**

The distal triceps is a tendon that is the main extensor of the elbow. Commonly the injury is noted with weakness on elbow extension. Surgical repair is usually indicated for significant partial injuries or complete tears; several different techniques are utilized, all generally with excellent outcomes.

### **Post-operative Rehabilitation**

#### **Weeks 1-2:**

Patient is kept in a long-arm splint for the first 1-2 weeks following the procedure. During this time, the patient works on wrist, hand, and digit range of motion. The splint is discontinued at the first post-operative visit.

#### **Weeks 2-4:**

Post-operative splint is discontinued. Patient is placed into a compressive dressing/sleeve and a hinged elbow brace. Hinged elbow brace will be unlocked from full extension to 60 degrees of elbow flexion. No active elbow extension and no extension against resistance. Ok to work on wrist, hand, and digit range of motion.

Elbow flexion will be gradually advanced to 90 degrees of flexion by week 4.

#### **Weeks 5-6:**

Continue with compressive dressing/sleeve and hinged elbow brace. Hinged elbow brace is gradually unlocked to 90 degrees. No active elbow extension and no extension against resistance. Ok to work on wrist, hand, and digit range of motion.

#### **Weeks 7-9:**

Continue with compressive dressing/sleeve and hinged elbow brace. Hinged elbow brace is gradually unlocked to full flexion. No active elbow extension and no extension against resistance. Ok to work on wrist, hand, and digit range of motion.

#### **Weeks 10-12:**

Continue with compressive dressing/sleeve. Full elbow range of motion should be achieved at this time. May begin active triceps extension with no resistance. Hinged elbow brace can be discontinued.

#### **Weeks 12+:**

Gradual weight training/TheraBand resisted triceps training

Gradually progress with generalized shoulder, wrist, and upper extremity strengthening.

**Disclaimer:** Earliest release is at 4 months. The patient is to return to sports at 6 months, once released at the discretion of the physical therapist as well as Dr. Kelsheimer.