



DR. JOHN AWOWALE
DISTAL BICEPS REPAIR POST-OP THERAPY PROTOCOL

Phase 1 – Early Protective Phase (0-3 weeks)

Goals for Phase 1 • Protect surgical repair • Maintain motion at 90 degrees of flexion	Precautions for Phase 1 • May use sling as needed
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Brace

- Patient is fitted in an IROM brace following surgery and is placed in 90 degrees of flexion and forearm in neutral

AROM

- Shoulder pendulums
- AROM of wrist flexion and extension with forearm in neutral
- AROM of unaffected joints as needed

Manual Therapy

- Edema management



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Phase 2 – Initiate Motion Phase (3-8 weeks)

Goals for Phase 2	Precautions for Phase 2
• Progress ROM	• None

Brace

- **Week 3:**
 - Lacking 60 degrees of extension
 - Flexion fully open
- **Week 4:** Lacking 45 degrees of extension
- **Week 5:** Lacking 30 degrees of extension
- **Week 6:** Full extension as tolerated
- **Week 8:** Discontinue IROM

AROM

- Continue AROM of unaffected joints
- AROM of elbow extension and flexion within confines of splint for HEP
- AROM of forearm supination and pronation with elbow at 90 degrees of flexion
- **Week 4:** Begin PROM of elbow flexion
- **Week 7:** Begin PROM of elbow extension and forearm pronation and supination

Manual Therapy

- Scar mobilization as needed
- Edema management as needed

Strengthening

- **Week 8:**
 - Sub- maximal isometric wrist flexion and extension with elbow at 90 degrees of flexion
 - Begin gentle grip and pinch strengthening with elbow at 90 degrees of flexion

Modalities

- Modalities as needed for pain and ROM



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Phase 3 – Strengthening (8+ weeks)

Goals for Phase 3	Precautions for Phase 3
• Restore range of motion • Restore strength • Return to function • Return to work and sports	• None

Brace

- Discontinue IROM at 8 weeks post-operative

AROM

- Continue to maximize both AROM and PROM in all places
- PROM of supination and pronation

Manual Therapy

- Scar mobilization as needed
- Edema mobilization as needed

Strengthening

- **Week 8**: Sub-maximal shoulder isometric exercises in extension, external rotation, abduction, and adduction
- **Week 9**: Sub-maximal shoulder flexion isometric exercises
- **Week 12**: Isotonic strengthening of elbow and forearm

Modalities

- Modalities as needed

Work Rehabilitation

- 14 weeks or with physician approval: initiate a work rehabilitation program for patients with high-demand, heavy manual labor occupations
- Return to work and sport with physician approval