

## **Post-Operative Instructions**

### **Open Elbow Surgery, Radial Head or Capitellum ORIF (Open reduction and internal fixation)**

#### **Day of Surgery**

- A. Diet as tolerated.
- B. Pain medication as needed every 6 hours.
- C. Icing is important for the first 5-7 days post-op. While the post-op dressing is in place, icing should be done continuously. Once the dressing is removed on the first or second day, ice is applied for 20-minute periods 3-4 times per day. Care must be taken with icing to avoid frostbite.
- D. Make sure you have a physical therapy post-op appointment set up for the first week-10 days after surgery.
- E. If you have a splint or half cast, you will start PT after the splint is removed in the office at your first postoperative appointment which is usually at 2 weeks

#### **First Post-Operative Day**

- A. Continue icing
- B. You will need to keep your incision dry when taking a shower. Do this for about 2 weeks after surgery. If you have a splint or half cast (hardshell) leave it dry. No need to do dressing changes until your first follow-up visit at 2 weeks post-op.

#### **Second Post-Operative Day**

- A. Continue icing

#### **Third Post-Operative Day Until Return Visit**

- A. Continue ice pack as needed.
- B. If you don't have a splint or half cast, you may remove surgical bandage after you shower and apply a waterproof bandage (may be purchased at your local pharmacy) to the wounds. Please ensure that the bandage is large enough to completely cover the incision. Apply a fresh waterproof bandage after each shower. If you have splint you do not need to change anything. Keep extremity dry

**Call our office @ 646-501-7223 option 4, option 2 to confirm your first postoperative visit, which is usually about 1-2 weeks after surgery. If you are experiencing any problems, please call our office or contact us via the internet at [www.newyorkortho.com](http://www.newyorkortho.com)**

## Post Operative Rehabilitation Protocol Following Open Elbow Surgery, Radial Head or Capitellum ORIF (Open reduction and internal fixation)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Diagnosis: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Surgery: \_\_\_\_\_

**Phase I – Immediate Post Operative Phase (Week 0-1)**

- **Goals**
  - Allow soft tissue healing
  - Decrease pain and inflammation
  - Retard muscular atrophy
- **Week 1**
  - Posterior splint at 90° elbow flexion with wrist free for motion (sling for comfort)
  - Elbow compression dressing
  - Exercises
    - Gripping
    - Wrist ROM (passive only)
    - Shoulder isometrics (no shoulder ER)

**Phase II – Intermediate Phase (Week 3-7)**

- **Goals**
  - Restore full pain free range of motion
  - Improve strength, power, endurance of upper extremity musculature
  - Gradually increase functional demands
- **Week 3-5**
  - Progress elbow ROM, emphasize full extension
  - Initiate flexibility exercises for:
    - Wrist ext/flexion
    - Forearm supination/pronation
    - Elbow ext/flexion
  - Initiate strengthening exercises for:
    - Wrist ext/flexion
    - Forearm supination/pronation
    - Elbow ext/flexors
    - Shoulder program (Thrower's Ten Shoulder Program)
- **Week 6-7**
  - Continue all exercises listed above
  - Initiate light sport activities

**Phase III – Advanced Strengthening Program (Week 8-12)**

- **Goals**
  - Improve strength/power/endurance
  - Gradually initiate sporting activities
- **Week 8-11**
  - Initiate eccentric exercise program
  - Initiate plyometric exercise drills
  - Continue shoulder and elbow strengthening and flexibility exercises
  - Initiate interval throwing program for throwing athletes

**Phase IV – Return to Activity (week 14-32)**

- **Goals**
  - Gradual return to activities
- **Week 12**
  - Return to competitive throwing
  - Continue Thrower’s Ten Exercise Program

**Comments:**

**Frequency:** \_\_\_\_ times per week

**Duration:** \_\_\_\_\_ weeks

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_