Post-Operative Instructions
Open Elbow Surgery, Radial Head Replacement/Resection

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 split 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.
Post Operative Rehabilitation Protocol:
Open Elbow Surgery, Radial Head Replacement/Resection

Name: _________________________________  Date: _______________________

Diagnosis: _______________________________  Date of Surgery: ___________

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

• Goals
  o Allow soft tissue healing
  o Decrease pain and inflammation
  o Retard muscular atrophy

• Week 1
  o Posterior splint at 90° elbow flexion with wrist free for motion (sling for comfort)
  o Elbow compression dressing
  o Exercises
    ▪ Gripping
    ▪ Wrist ROM (passive only)
    ▪ Shoulder isometrics (no shoulder ER)

Phase II – Intermediate Phase (Week 3-7)

• Goals
  o Restore full pain free range of motion
  o Improve strength, power, endurance of upper extremity musculature
  o Gradually increase functional demands

• Week 3-5
  o Progress elbow ROM, emphasize full extension
  o Initiate flexibility exercises for:
    ▪ Wrist ext/flexion
    ▪ Forearm supination/pronation
    ▪ Elbow ext/flexion
  o Initiate strengthening exercises for:
    ▪ Wrist ext/flexion
    ▪ Forearm supination/pronation
    ▪ Elbow ext/ flexors
    ▪ Shoulder program (Thrower’s Ten Shoulder Program)

• Week 6-7
  o Continue all exercises listed above
  o Initiate light sport activities

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

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

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

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

Comments:

Frequency: _____ times per week                Duration: ______ weeks

Signature: ___________________________________________                Date: ___________________________