

## Distal Biceps Tendon Repair

### Physical Therapy Protocol

#### Brace

- Initially blocked at 70 degrees.
- Worn at all times except during bathing and physical therapy.
- Discontinue brace at 8 weeks and after achieving full ROM.

#### Range of Motion (ROM)

- **Active extension:** 45 degrees.
- **Passive flexion:** 135 degrees.
- **Week 3:** Begin physical therapy, progressing extension 10–15 degrees weekly.
- Adjust brace settings to maintain a block 10–15 degrees short of the patient’s maximal achieved extension to protect the repair.

### Phase 1 – Protection (Post-Op Weeks 1–2)

#### Goals:

- Protect the surgical repair.
- Minimize swelling and pain.

#### Guidelines:

- Rest, ice, and elevate.
- Perform hand and wrist exercises to improve circulation and minimize swelling.

### Phase 2 – Range of Motion and Strengthening (Weeks 3–6)

#### Physical Therapy:

- Begin at Week 3, starting with progressing motion 10–15 degrees per week, as outlined above.

#### Exercises:

- Continue hand and wrist activities to support circulation.

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**Precautions:**

- Avoid supination exercises.
- Avoid resisted elbow activities.
- Engage in shoulder strengthening exercises that do not involve elbow activity.

**Phase 3 – Strengthening (Post-Op Weeks 6–12)**

- **Week 6:** Begin isometric tricep strengthening.
- **Week 8:** Begin concentric tricep strengthening and gentle resisted elbow flexion and supination.

**Phase 4 – Elbow Flexion (Post-Op Weeks 12–16)**

**Goals:**

- Begin isolated elbow strengthening.

**Exercises:**

- **Week 12:** Initiate isometric elbow flexion.
- **Week 16:** Start concentric elbow flexion.
- Add rotator cuff (RC) strengthening and stabilization exercises.

**Phase 5 – Functional Return (Post-Op Week 16+)**

**Goals:**

- Progress through advanced strengthening and prepare for functional activities.

**Exercises:**

- Eccentric strengthening.
- Sports-specific exercises.
- Upper extremity (UE) plyometric activities.