

The 3 Phases of Therapy After Distal Bicep Tendon Repair

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Phase One: Orthosis for Protection

Weeks 0 to 1

- Post operative cast, long arm, or hinge orthosis (per protocol)
- Begin wrist and digit flexion and extension
- Cryotherapy

Week 2

- Progress to hinge orthosis (per protocol)
- Suture removal
- Gravity assisted flexion and extension of the elbow
- Begin passive range of motion (PROM) for elbow flexion and supination

Weeks 3 through 6

- Begin scar management
- Increase hinge orthosis by ten degrees of extension
- Continue exercises from week two

Phase Two: Range of Motion

Weeks 6 through 8

- Discontinue orthosis
- Begin elbow AROM
- Begin AROM for wrist supination/pronation
- Begin passive wrist pronation
- Begin functional exercises (such as light swimming, jogging, dancing, etc.)
- Begin isometric tricep exercises (such as pressing down on a tabletop/armrest with the arm at 90°)
- Continue scar management

Phase Three: Strengthening

Weeks 8 through 12

- Begin light strengthening
 - Bicep curls
 - Resistive pronation/supination with elbow at 90°
 - Weighted wrist curls
 - Resistive tricep extension
 - Hand grip strengthening
 - Shoulder strengthening may be included
- Begin progressive strengthening (week 8)
- Include open chain exercises and plyometrics, as well as appropriate return-to-work activities (week 8)
- Implement heavy strengthening to insure appropriate scapular stabilization (week 12)