



ULNAR COLLATERAL LIGAMENT RECONSTRUCTION REHABILITATION PROTOCOL

This protocol is designed to guide the recovery and rehabilitation following surgical reconstruction of the ulnar collateral ligament. It is divided into 4 phases with the ultimate goal of regaining full function and strength of the operative extremity. For full recovery it will require significant time for graft healing and incorporation as well as a dedicated program for development of strength and endurance. Generally speaking it requires approximately 8 months for return to competitive throwing.

PHASE 1: Post Op Days 1 to 10. Immediate Post Op Phase

Goals

- Pain control
- Limit soft tissue swelling
- Wound healing
- Begin Wrist and finger ROM

Exercises

- Shoulder ROM and sub-maximal isometrics as tolerated
- Wrist flexion/extension
- Finger ROM
- Grip ball exercises
- Maintain splint and compressive wrap on elbow

Modalities

- Cryotherapy

PHASE 2: Weeks 2-6. Early Range of Motion

Goals

- Initiate Elbow assisted range of motion
- Continue shoulder, wrist and elbow motion
- Transition to hinged elbow brace

Brace

- Allowing ROM 30-100 degrees for week 2-4
- ROM 15-110 degrees for weeks 5-6

Exercises

- Continue all of above
- Allow submaximal isometrics of shoulder, elbow and wrist
- Elbow active-assisted ROM 30-100

Modalities

- Cryotherapy
- E-stim
- Scar massage and scar gel pads for protection as needed

PHASE 3: Weeks 7 to 12. Early Function

Goals

- Initiate elbow active range of motion
- Begin light resisted exercise
- Increase protected elbow range of motion

Brace

- Allow Free ROM in brace

Exercises

- Progress shoulder exercises to include cuff strengthening (Thrower's 10)
- Initiate light resistance exercises for elbow flexion/extension, wrist pronation/supination, and elbow flexion/extension to include isotonic, concentric and eccentric exercises.

Modalities

- Cryotherapy
- Scar massage

PHASE 4: Weeks 13-24. Return to Functional Activities.

Goals

- Improve power and endurance
- Return to sport-specific activity

Brace

- Discontinue

Exercises

- Continue strengthening with progressive increases in resistance and weights
- Plyometric strengthening program of upper and lower extremities
- Initiate **Interval Throwing Program** at Week 20
- May return to light sports and functional activities (golf, swimming, etc) at 16 weeks