

Post Operative Rehabilitation Following Tennis Elbow

Phase I — Days 1-7

- **Goals**
 - Improve/regain range of motion
 - Retard muscular atrophy
 - Decrease pain/inflammation
- **Day 1-7**
 - Movement of wrist and fingers for 2 minutes
 - 3-5x/day
 - Ice and NSAIDs used for pain control
 - Look for signs of wound infection:
 - Excessive swelling, warmth, redness, oozing from the incision, fever
 - Day 3: Showering is allowed, with bandages off
 - Compression/ice 4--5 times daily
- **Day 7-17**
 - More aggressive ROM encourage in and out of shower
 - Goal for day 17 are 80% of normal elbow ROM
 - Resume light elbow activities only
 - Continue isometrics and gripping exercises
 - Continue use of ice
- **Day 18-21**
 - Sub maximal isometrics are started
 - Begin antigravity wrist flexion, extension, supination and pronation without pain
 - If painful: utilize counterforce brace during exercise
 - Once patient can perform 30 reps without pain the can progress to a 1-pound weight or light resistance band
 - All exercises are performed with the elbow bent to 90⁰ and resting on a table or lower extremity
 - Overpressure into extension (3-4 times daily)
 - Continue joint mobilization techniques
 - Biceps, triceps, wrist flex/ext, sup/pronators
 - Continue use of ice post exercise

Phase II — Intermediate Phase

- **Goals**
 - Increase range of motion
 - Improve strength/power/endurance
 - Initiate functional activities
- **Week 3-6**
 - Therapeutic exercises:
 - Rotator cuff, elbow, scapular stabilization training with light resistance
 - Aerobic conditioning on stationary bike or treadmill
 - Overpressure into elbow extension
 - Continue PRE program for elbow and wrist musculature
 - Initiate shoulder program (Thrower's Ten Shoulder Program)
 - Continue joint mobilization
 - Continue use of ice post exercise

Phase III — Advanced Strengthening Program

- **Goals**
 - Improve strength/power/endurance
 - Gradual return to functional activities
- **Criteria to Enter Phase III**
 - Full non-painful ROM
 - No pain or tenderness
- **Week 8-12**
 - Continue PRE program for elbow and wrist
 - Continue shoulder program
 - Continue stretching for elbow/shoulder
 - Initiate Interval program and gradually return to sporting activities
 - Patient is allowed to return to athletics once their grip strength is normal