



REHABILITATION GUIDELINES
ULNAR/RADIAL COLLATERAL LIGAMENT REPAIR

Immediate Post Op

-Pt. released from surgery in thumb spica cast or splint , with surgical pins in place.

DOS:

2 WEEKS Post-op

- cast or rigid splint applied

Begin Date:

6 WEEKS Post-op

- cast & pins removed
- referred to PT/OT for gamekeeper's thumb splint
- AROM to thumb, hand, wrist; if necessary, forearm, elbow, shoulder
- PROM to wrist
- after 24 hrs, pt. may begin scar remodel techniques

Begin Date:

8 WEEKS Post-op

- Putty exercises; instruct pt. on proper technique to avoid stress to UCL or RCL (see exercise sheet, next page)
- PRE for wrist, hand, and UE

Begin Date:

10 WEEKS Post-op

- Patient released from splint (unless activities place high stress on thumb joint—gymnastics, carpentry, skiing; these patients should continue splint use)
- Return to normal activities if WNL for grip, pinch, and OK from surgeon

Begin Date:

16 to 18 WEEKS Post-op

- repair to ligament is now mature
- Activities that stress the UCL now ok without splint, per surgeon's release—may require figure 8 taping, etc.

Begin Date:

EXERCISES FOR UCL LIGAMENT REPAIR

Do _____ repetitions of the following exercises, _____ times per day.

THUMB EXERCISES

Position: Face table. Both palms are flat on the table

1. Slide the thumb in toward the index finger; then slide away from index finger
2. Raise thumb up toward ceiling; hold _____ seconds.

Position: Face table. Palm facing toward ceiling.

1. Bring thumb in toward index finger; then, raise thumb towards ceiling (make an "L" with your hand and thumb).
2. Blocking: stabilize each portion of the thumb while bending/straightening each joint individually. (MPJ, IPJ).
3. Opposition: reach for the little finger with the thumb tip.

WRIST EXERCISES

Position: forearm resting on table, wrist and hand hanging off table edge.

1. Palm down: make a fist. Reach toward the floor, then straighten fingers and reach to ceiling.
2. Palm up: Reach for floor, then reach for the ceiling.
3. Thumb up: reach for floor, then reach for ceiling.

Position: Sit or stand, away from table

1. Put palms together in "prayer" position; lift elbows for wrist stretch
2. Put backs of hands together, fingers relaxed toward floor: bring elbows down for wrist stretch.

Position: Sit or stand with elbows touching ribs, close to your side.

1. Move palm up toward ceiling, then turn palm down toward floor.

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES FOR STIFF ARM:

Bend and straighten elbow.

Thumb up, raise arm up straight up.

Scar massage: Massage with lotion on or around scar

Desensitization: Begin with light pressure and soft fabric. Progress to moderate pressure and various textures, rubbing along scar or sensitive area.