

**PHYSICAL THERAPY PROTOCOL  
PROCEDURE: DISTAL HUMERUS ORIF**

The goal of the rehabilitation is to gradually regain motion in the elbow joint and eventually regain strength. This will be a steady process to allow time to protect fracture healing.

**Week 1-2**

- Brace or splint to be worn and locked at all times except for exercises and hygiene
- Minimize swelling and pain
- Range of Motion
  - Active/Active-Assisted Elbow Flexion
    - Limitation: No flexion past 90 degrees
  - Active/Active-Assisted Elbow Extension
    - Limitation: No extension restriction
  - Active Forearm Supination
  - Active Forearm Pronation
  - Hand, Wrist, Shoulder ROM to prevent stiffness

**Week 3-6**

- Brace or splint to be worn and locked at all times except for exercises and hygiene
- Minimize swelling and pain
- Goal: Full elbow and forearm ROM by 6 weeks; AROM/AAROM as below
  - Week 3: 0-100
  - Week 4: 0-110
  - Week 5: 0-120
  - Week 6: 0-130, then >130 as tolerated
- Hand, Wrist, Shoulder ROM to prevent stiffness
- Strengthening
  - Begin grip strengthening exercises
  - Scapular stabilization exercises
  - Triceps/biceps isometric exercises OK

**Week 7-12**

- Brace/splint is discontinued
- Begin light activity.
- No aggressive or repetitious activity.
- Continue passive stretching to achieve full range of motion
- Begin active range of motion exercises for elbow flexion and extension, and forearm supination and pronation
- Strengthening

- Begin progressive resistive strengthening of upper extremity
  - Theraband, grip strengthening, and progress to weights

**Week 12+**

- Continue resistive strengthening
- Advance as tolerated
- Begin endurance program tailored to work/sports activities
- Full unrestricted activity is permitted after 4-6 months for most patients depending upon patient activity demands.