

Rehabilitation Protocol: Elbow Fracture Repair (Distal Humerus, Olecranon, Radial Head/Neck, Proximal Ulna)

Phase 1 (Weeks 0-2)

- Splint/sling worn full-time
- Work on finger motion
- No formal physical therapy

Phase 2 (Weeks 2-6)

- **Sling:** Discontinue splint/sling
- **Range of Motion:** Active and gentle Active-Assist ROM. Avoid purely passive elbow ROM.
- **Therapeutic Exercises:**
 - 0.5 lb. lifting restriction with operative arm
 - Active/Passive range of motion to shoulder, wrist, hand
 - Shoulder isometrics with the arm against the body
 - Stationary bicycle/trainer (avoid pressure on operative arm)
 - Nerve glides

Phase 3 (Weeks 6-10)

- **Range of Motion:** Add progressive passive ROM exercises to the elbow
- **Therapeutic Exercises:**
 - Advance to 5 lb. lifting restriction with operative arm
 - Advance to light gradual resistance
 - Therabands, transitioning to light weights over time
 - May use elliptical trainer without applying force through the operative arm

Phase 4 (Starting Week 10)

- **Range of Motion:** Continue active/passive elbow ROM exercises. Become more aggressive with passive ROM if needed.
- Progress to full weightbearing/lifting with the operative arm
- Okay to return to full use of elliptical trainer and running
- Clearance for outdoor sports/recreation will depend on overall bony healing and will be tailored to each individual patient.