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Lateral Epicondylitis Release and Repair

General Principles

- Protect healing tissue
- Restore range of motion (ROM) progressively
- Gradually reintroduce strength and function
- Avoid premature loading of the extensor tendon origin

Phase I: Protection & Early Motion (Weeks 0–2)

Goals:

- Control pain and swelling
- Protect surgical site
- Begin gentle ROM of elbow once the splint comes off

Precautions:

- Splint until the first postoperative visit at 7 to 10 days
- No lifting, gripping, or resisted wrist/elbow extension

Interventions:

- Ice and elevation
- Elbow AROM: flexion, extension, supination, pronation
- Shoulder pendulum exercises

Phase II: Intermediate Phase (Weeks 2–6)

Goals:

- Restore full pain-free ROM
- Begin light strengthening
- Promote tendon gliding and soft tissue mobility

Interventions:

- Wrist brace after the splint comes off until 3 weeks postoperatively
- Continue elbow ROM
- Begin wrist ROM once wrist brace comes off
- Initiate isometric strengthening:
    - Wrist extension/flexion, supination/pronation
- Gentle soft tissue massage to lateral epicondyle region
- Light grip strengthening (e.g., therapy putty, sponge)
- Stretching: wrist extensors, flexors (gentle)

Phase III: Strengthening Phase (Weeks 6–10)

Goals:

- Improve muscular endurance and strength
- Normalize neuromuscular control and function

Interventions:

- Progress to resisted isotonic exercises:
    - Wrist flexion/extension with light weights
    - Supination/pronation with light dumbbell or hammer

    - Radial/ulnar deviation
- Eccentric loading of wrist extensors (important for long-term recovery)
- Continue grip and pinch strengthening
- Functional activities (light household tasks, typing, lifting <5–10 lb)

Phase IV: Return to Activity Phase (Weeks 10–16+)

Goals:

- Return to full activity or sport
- Prevent recurrence

Interventions:

- Sport/job-specific training
- Plyometrics (e.g., ball tosses) if applicable
- Increase resistance and repetitions
- Work conditioning if job requires heavy use of arm/hand