



Post-Operative Therapy for Radial Head Fracture

Note: This pathway is designed to serve as a guide to rehabilitation. Indications for progression should be based on patient's complete operative procedure, functional capacity and response to treatment.

Days 10-21:

- Elbow AAROM → AROM into flexion and extension with elbow at side (adducted). No extension in supinated position.
- Shoulder, wrist/hand AROM/gentle strengthening with considerations of elbow involvement.

Goals

- Edema and pain control, wound care.
- Maintain AROM / prevent stiffness of cervical spine/shoulder/wrist/hand.
- Maintain integrity of repair including prosthesis, ligaments, tendons involved. Avoid supinated extension and any values forces on the elbow.
- 30-105 degrees elbow ROM by day 21.

Weeks 3-6:

- Continue AROM/exercises at surrounding joints.
- Continue AROM exercises at the elbow for flexion and extension.
 - Begin gradual isotonic strengthening into elbow flexion and extension.
- Begin AAROM → AROM into pronation and supination.

Goals:

- Edema and pain control.
- Prevent stiffness of surrounding joints.
- Near full flexion / extension ROM by week 6.
 - Full extension typically more challenging to recover.

Weeks 7-12:

- Continue AROM/exercises at surrounding joints.

- Continue progression of AROM / isotonic strengthening exercises at the elbow for flexion, extension, pronation and supination.
- Address remaining deficits.

Goals:

- Prevent stiffness of surrounding joints.
- Full pronation/supination ROM by end of week 8.
- Regain full pain-free ROM and return to prior level of function.