

LRTI Post-op Protocol

Immediate Post-Operative Period Weeks 0-4

- ❖ Protection of surgical site and incision
- ❖ Splint will be placed at surgery and is to remain clean, dry and intact for the first 14 days
- ❖ At Week 2, splint will be removed and the incisions evaluated. You will be placed in a cast for an additional 4 weeks
- ❖ At Week 6, you will be placed into a brace
- ❖ Decrease pain and inflammation - ice and elevate.
- ❖ Maintain full elbow motions

Phase I - Early Mobilization Weeks 6-7

Goals

- ❖ Protection of surgical site and incision
- ❖ Gradual increase of active range of motion of thumb CMC, MP, IP, ABD, opposition
 - *Performed gently and slowly every 1-2 hours while awake, repeat each exercise 10 times, holding in each direction for a goal of 5 seconds
- ❖ Decrease pain and inflammation
- ❖ Maintain full elbow, wrist and hand motions
- ❖ Gradual increase participation in ADL's while protecting repair
- ❖ Scar massage when incision heals
- ❖ Desensitization

Precautions

- ❖ Splint on at all times except exercises and hygiene
- ❖ Avoid full thumb ADD
- ❖ Assess for thumb laxity. If laxity is present and can obtain opposition thumb to the base of the little finger, limit exercise and increase splint use for increased stability and scar formation at the base of the thumb.
- ❖ Do not support body weight on hands
- ❖ Non-weight bearing
- ❖ Avoid excessive gripping, squeezing, and pinching
- ❖ Avoid excessive stretching
- ❖ Avoid sudden movements
- ❖ Do not drive until authorized by surgeon

Phase II - Mobilization

Week 8

Goals

- ❖ Continue Splint at night, but may remove for exercises and light daily activities
- ❖ Decrease pain and inflammation
- ❖ Initiation of light resistive exercises such as therapy putty, clothespins, pinch, foam blocks, etc.
- ❖ Increase thumb opposition, thumb ABD (palmar and radial), flexion and extension, and active thumb ADD (not resistive/forceful)
- ❖ Gradual increase in function and strength

Precautions

- ❖ Avoid sudden motions
- ❖ Resume light functional activities
- ❖ Avoid heavy housework/yard work – No vacuuming/shoveling

Phase III

Week 9-12

Goals

- ❖ Splint used only at night and try to wean from this during the day
- ❖ Obtain full ROM for all thumb and wrist motions
- ❖ Strengthening as tolerated (pinch, grip, etc.)

Precautions

- ❖ Respect pain and avoid motions and exercises that produce pain
- ❖ Joint protection and ergonomics

Phase 4

Weeks 10-14

Goals

- ❖ Discontinue use of splint
- ❖ Progression towards moderate resistive exercises (lifting, tool use, BTE,
- ❖ Return to work and leisure activities

Precautions

- ❖ Six month plus recovery period for restored functional use of thumb