

PHYSICAL THERAPY PROTOCOL

Arthroscopic Biceps Tenodesis

Tenodesis of the long head of the biceps to the proximal humerus

The long head of the biceps has been released and re-anchored to the humerus. The fixation must be protected by avoiding resisted elbow flexion and forearm supination, and by avoiding forceful stretching of the biceps, until it heals. Shoulder motion is restored in parallel.

General Precautions

- Sling for 2-4 weeks.
- No resisted elbow flexion or forearm supination for 6-8 weeks (protect the tenodesis).
- Avoid forceful shoulder extension and passive biceps stretch early.
- No lifting with the operative arm until cleared.

Phase I — Protection Weeks 0-4

Goals

- Protect the tenodesis
- Control pain
- Begin protected shoulder motion

Precautions / Restrictions

- No active or resisted elbow flexion/supination
- Avoid shoulder extension stretch
- Sling except for exercise

Exercises & Interventions

- Pendulums
- Passive/active-assisted shoulder flexion and ER within comfort
- Gentle passive elbow motion (no resisted)
- Wrist/hand motion
- Scapular setting
- Cryotherapy

Criteria to Advance

- Pain controlled
- Passive shoulder motion improving

Phase II — Active Motion Weeks 4-8

Goals

- Wean sling
- Restore full shoulder motion
- Restore elbow motion

Precautions / Restrictions

- No resisted biceps activity until ~6-8 weeks

Exercises & Interventions

- Active shoulder range of motion in all planes
- Full active elbow flexion/extension and forearm rotation (unresisted)
- Begin scapular and rotator cuff isometrics
- Posture/scapular strengthening

Criteria to Advance

- Full active shoulder and elbow motion

Phase III — Strengthening Weeks 8-12

Goals

- Restore rotator cuff, scapular, and biceps strength

Exercises & Interventions

- Progressive rotator cuff and scapular strengthening
- Begin progressive biceps (flexion/supination) strengthening
- Endurance work

Criteria to Advance

- Strength $\geq 80\%$ opposite side
- Full painless motion

Phase IV — Return to Activity Months 3-4

Goals

- Return to full activity and sport

Exercises & Interventions

- Advanced strengthening
- Sport-/job-specific progression

Criteria to Advance

- Symmetric strength
- Full painless function

This protocol is a general guideline. Progression is criteria-based and may be advanced or slowed by Dr. O'Donnell based on intraoperative findings, tissue quality, fixation, and individual healing. Time frames are approximate. Direct questions to the office at (305) 393-8810.