

Post-op rehabilitation program for open or arthroscopic elbow debridement

Problem: arthritis of elbow causing pain and reduce range of movement

Aim: to decrease pain and increase range of movement in elbow

Important points: begin movement immediately to avoid recurrence of stiffness

Forbidden: heavy activities or heavy work before 6 weeks

Expectations:

- return to desk jobs at 14 days
- driving from end of week two (if pain and function allows safe driving)
- breaststroke and freestyle swimming at 6 weeks
- return to manual work at 6 weeks
- all activities including racquet sports by 3 months

Physiotherapy protocol day 1 onwards:

- Ensure adequate pain relief, neurovascular status normal and no signs of infection
- Full active movement of shoulder, wrist and hand
- Active assisted flexion, extension, pronation and supination within comfort zone

Physiotherapy protocol day 3 onwards:

- Removal of bulky dressing
- Gentle grip strengthening
- Sling only out of the house
- Active flexion, extension, pronation and supination within comfort zone

Physiotherapy protocol week 2 onwards:

- Manual therapy will help with oedema and scar desensitization
- Aim for full range of movement

Physiotherapy protocol week 6 onwards:

- Strengthening exercises