



# Elbow Contracture Release Therapy Instructions Laith Al-Shihabi, MD

## **Day of Surgery**

### Motion:

- Begin passive motion exercises and CPM use while the anesthetic block is in place.
- Dressings are left in place during the hospital stay.
- CPM use will continue at home for 1 month after discharge.
- Instruct on active and passive stretching exercises along with weighted stretches using 2lbs weight.

## **3-5 days**

### Dressings:

- Remove operative dressing and replace with soft, dry dressing.
- Fit for static-progressive splints to assist with recovery of motion.

### Motion:

- Continue motion exercises as above.
- Also incorporate static-progressive splinting for 30 minutes 2-3 times per day to tolerance, with the goal to gradually increase motion.

### Edema Control:

- Per therapist.

## **1-6 weeks**

### Splint:

- Continue use of the static progressive splint.

### Motion:

- Continue above motion and splinting exercises. Exercises should be performed at least 3-4 times per day for 10-15 minutes per session, in addition to therapy 3-5 times per week.
- 5lbs lifting restriction within the first 2 weeks, which can be lifted as symptoms allow.
- Discontinue home CPM use at 4 weeks.

## **6-10 weeks**

### Splint:

- Continue use of the static progressive splints for 6 weeks.

### Motion:

- Continue above motion and splinting exercises.

### Strengthening:

- Begin forearm and elbow strengthening at 6 weeks, as symptoms allow.
- Transition to home exercise program vs. work or sport-specific conditioning at 8-10 weeks.

## **10-12+ weeks**

Wean from splint at 3-4 months; night use may be indicated for up to 6 months if there is evidence of contracture recurrence. Gradually return to light activity and exercise by 12 weeks.