

## Distal Biceps Tendon Repair/Reconstruction

Distal biceps tendon repair or reconstruction is performed for:

1. An **acute** (within 3 weeks) traumatic distal biceps rupture
2. A **chronic** distal biceps tendon rupture

### Rehabilitation Protocol for an **Acute** Tear Repair

Some of the physiotherapy terms may be unfamiliar to you now. They will become clear as you work with your physiotherapist.

| Time after surgery | Physiotherapy/Support  |
|--------------------|--|
| Day 1 to 2 weeks   | <p><b>During the first two weeks you can expect to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• perform pain free active flexion and extension within limits of a sling</li> <li>• engage in full supination and pronation exercises</li> <li>• perform full active shoulder movements with your elbow in flexion</li> </ul>                      |
| 2 to 6 weeks       | <p><b>During the next 4 weeks, you will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• perform active range of motion movement in all directions, to the point of mild stretch (but no over pressure)</li> </ul> <p><i>Avoid sudden loading and unplanned movements for 6 weeks</i></p>   |
| 6 to 12 weeks      | <p><b>During the next 6 weeks, you can expect to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• continue to perform active range of motion exercises</li> <li>• introduce light resistance &lt;2kg through full range of motion</li> <li>• gradually increase resistance, keeping progress pain free with easy and good quality movement</li> </ul> |

### Milestones for an **Acute** Tear Repair

| Time after surgery | What you can expect from your shoulder   |
|--------------------|--|
| Week 6             | <p>Full range of motion, flexion/extension, and rotation</p> <p>Pain free, return to driving and working</p> |
| Week 12            | >90% strength in comparison to opposite flexion/rotation   |

## Rehabilitation Protocol for a **Chronic** Tear Repair

Some of the physiotherapy terms may be unfamiliar to you now. They will become clear as you work with your physiotherapist.

**\*\*We recommend that you do not use a 'TheraBand' in your rehab program\*\***

| Time after surgery | Physiotherapy/Support   |
|--------------------|---|
| Day 1 to 2 weeks   | <b>During the first two weeks you can expect to:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perform pain free active flexion and extension within limits of a sling</li> <li>engage in full supination and pronation exercises</li> <li>perform full active shoulder movements with your elbow in flexion</li> </ul>                      |
| 2 to 6 weeks       | <b>During the next 4 weeks, you will:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perform active range of motion movement in all directions, to the point of mild stretch (but no over pressure)</li> </ul> <p><i>Avoid sudden loading and unplanned movements for 6 weeks</i></p>   |
| 6 to 12 weeks      | <b>During the next 6 weeks, you can expect to:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>continue to perform active range of motion exercises</li> <li>introduce light resistance &lt;2kg through full range of motion</li> <li>gradually increase resistance, keeping progress pain free with easy and good quality movement</li> </ul> |

## Milestones for a **Chronic** Tear Repair

| Time after surgery | What you can expect from your shoulder   |
|--------------------|--|
| Week 6             | Full range of motion, flexion/extension, and rotation<br>Pain free, 50-70% extension range of motion compared to your other side   |
| Week 12            | <15 lag extension (80% extension)<br>Full range of motion, flexion/extension, rotation<br>Pain free, return to driving and working |

## Return to functional activities

| <b>Activity</b>            | <b>When you can expect to be able to do the activity</b>                       |
|----------------------------|--|
| Return to work             | Sedentary job: as tolerated<br>Manual job: 3 months                            |
| Driving                    | 6-8 weeks  |
| Swimming                   | Breaststroke: 6 weeks<br>Freestyle: 12 weeks                                   |
| Lifting                    | Avoid lifting heavy items for 3 months, after then, as guided by your strength |
| Golf                       | 3 months   |
| Contact/High Impact Sports | 3 months<br>e.g. Rugby League, AFL, Martial Arts, Racket Sports, Surfing       |

DR FRASER TAYLOR