

Distal Humerus Fracture Rehab Protocol – Operative (ORIF)

Office visits:

- 2w, 6w, 12w, 6m

Xrays:

- Will be done at each visit

Physical therapy:

- Therapy prescription will be provided at your 2-week appointment.

Weeks 0-2:

Splint	• Splint (in extension)
Weight Restrictions	• < 1 lb (phone, toothbrush, etc)
Range of Motion	• No elbow motion in splint; ok for wrist and hand motion
Exercises	• Elbow Phase I – Home Exercise Program
Misc	• Ice 3-4x/day with ice packs on towel over elbow • Edema control with elevation, ice, and ball squeezes

Weeks 2-6:

Brace	• Hinged elbow brace (unlocked 0-90 degrees) – may remove for hygiene
Weight Restrictions	• < 1 lb (phone, toothbrush, etc) ◦ May begin using arm for daily activities in front of body (i.e. computer/desk work)
Range of Motion	• Supination/Pronation: Full and active • Passive extension to 0 degrees • Active flexion to 90 degrees
Exercises	• Work on elbow motion exercises at least 5x per day
Misc	• Edema control with elevation, ice, and ball squeezes • By week 4: Start static splinting protocol if stiff (see elbow contracture protocol)

Weeks 6-12:

Brace	• Wean from brace
Weight Restrictions	• < 5 lb
Range of Motion	• Progress to full, active motion in flexion and extension
Exercises	• Work on elbow motion exercises at least 5x per day

Months 3+:

Brace	• None
Weight Restrictions	• Progressive strengthening without limits • May return to light activity and exercise, progress from there
Range of Motion	• Full elbow motion