

Elbow Radial Head Fracture Non-Operative Protocol

Phase 1	Initial Injury
Suggested Therapeutic Exercise/Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posterior elbow splint, sling • Finger and wrist ROM • Ice

Phase 2	1 to 4 weeks
Appointments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physician visit for imaging • OT for hinged elbow brace and instruction on gentle elbow AROM
Precautions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No lifting • Keep brace on with activity and night
Suggested Therapeutic Exercise/Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elbow AROM/AAROM into flexion • Starting at 40 degrees short of full extension, allow patient to advance 10 degrees per week until full pain free elbow extension is obtained • AROM forearm rotation (pronation/supination) • Continue digit ROM • Continue all unaffected joint ROM • Ice as needed

Phase 3	4 to 6 weeks
Appointments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physician visit for imaging • See OT for monitoring return of full elbow and forearm AROM
Suggested Therapeutic Exercise/Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with brace until physician clearance • Continue with elbow AROM/AAROM into flexion/extension and forearm AROM • Begin light grip strengthening

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Phase 4	6 to 8 weeks
Suggested Therapeutic Exercise/Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discontinue brace between 6-8 weeks (physician directed) • Continue to restore functional ROM • Begin PROM to elbow and forearm • Cardiovascular exercises as tolerated • Begin upper extremity strengthening to shoulder, elbow, wrist, and hand

Phase 5	8 to 10 weeks
Suggested Therapeutic Exercise/Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress upper extremity strengthening • Continue stretching/PROM as needed