

# Subpectoral Bicep Tenodesis Physical Therapy Protocol



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**Definition:** An open sub-pectoral bicep tenodesis is a procedure which involves removing the long head of the biceps from the glenohumeral joint and fixing it to the humerus deep to the pectoralis major tendon.

## Phase I: Immediate motion Phase (Week 1 to Week 4)

### GOALS

- Allow healing
- Early protected PROM
- Minimize pain/inflammation

### SLING

- Sling for 4 weeks (removed 4-5 times per day in order to perform the exercises that follow).
- Sling must be worn during sleep for the first 4 weeks.

### PRECAUTIONS

- **No** active elbow flexion
- **No** biceps tension for 6 weeks: avoid long lever arm flexion ROM and resisted elbow flex, supination or shoulder flexion

### EXERCISES

#### Week 1

- Pendulums
- Wrist and hand AROM and gripping
- Modalities PRN for pain and inflammation

#### Weeks 2-4

- Continue previous exercises

- Initiate gentle, pain-free PROM for shoulder being careful to avoid excessive external rotation ROM/stretching
- Initiate gentle elbow PROM

## Phase II: Intermediate Phase/AROM (Week 5 to Week 8)

### CRITERIA

- Minimal pain and inflammation
- Full PROM shoulder/elbow

### GOALS

- Gradual increase in AROM
- Minimize pain/inflammation
- Initiate light, waist-level functional activities
- Continue PROM

### SLING

- Discontinue sling during day and night.

### EXERCISES

- Continue previous exercises
- Initiate scapular strengthening with scapular retractions
- Initiate AROM of elbow – pronation, supination, flexion and extension
- Gentle passive stretching at end of elbow ranges to maintain or increase flexibility
- Initiate AAROM of shoulder all motions
- **At week 6 progress AROM of shoulder** (lawn chair progression beginning with elbow flexed and progress to elbow extended)
- Isometrics with the arm at the side for rotator cuff or deltoid strengthening

*If you have any problems or questions, please call your doctor's office (8am-5pm).*

*Answering service for after hours.*

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**Any strengthening activities related to elbow flexion, supination, or forward elevation of the arm with the elbow extended should be restricted until week 12 following biceps tenodesis.**

## Phase III: Strengthening Phase (Week 9 to Week 12)

### CRITERIA

- Full AROM elbow and shoulder
- Good scapular control with AROM

### GOALS

- Maintain full pain free AROM of shoulder
- Normalize strength, endurance and neuromuscular control
- Initiate chest level functional activities
- Continue PROM/stretching PRN

### EXERCISES

- Continue previous exercises
- Initiate T-band ER/IR
- Initiate prone rowing
- Initiate full can scapular plane raises with good mechanics
- Initiate biceps isometrics
- At 12 weeks may initiate biceps curls with LIGHT (less than 1 lb) resistance

**Any strengthening activities related to elbow flexion, supination, or forward elevation of the arm with the elbow extended should be restricted until week 12 following biceps tenodesis.**

## Phase IV: Advanced Strengthening Phase (Week 13 to Week 16)

### CRITERIA

- Normal ROM
- Minimal pain
- Appropriate RC and scapular strength for below shoulder level activities

### GOALS

- Maintain full, pain free AROM of shoulder

- Normalize and progress strength for function/recreational activities
- Continue PROM/stretching PRN

### EXERCISES

- Continue previous exercises
- Biceps curls with LIGHT (less than 1 lb) resistance
- Strengthening of triceps, rotator cuff, deltoid and scapular stabilizers performed at least 3 times per week

Stay high rep and low resistance with above exercises or any that affect the glenohumeral joint and may fire the biceps.

## Phase V: Return to Activity Phase (16+ Weeks)

### CRITERIA

- Normal ROM
- Muscle strength that fulfills works/sport requirements

### GOALS

- Return to full work and recreational activities

### EXERCISES

- Continue previous exercises
- Advance biceps strengthening to 2lbs or greater
- Progress previous strengthening program; continue to increase weight resistance with isotonic
- Focus exercises on eccentric strengthening of posterior rotator cuff and scapular muscles
- Add total body conditioning, including strength and endurance training if appropriate
- Initiate sport/work specific drills or activities

Initiate appropriate interval throwing, pitching, tennis and golf program as appropriate at 16+ weeks. Return to sport, work and prior activity level unrestricted based on physician approval and completion of rehab.

### RED FLAGS

- Decrease the intensity of the exercises if
  - Mild discomfort lasts longer than 1 hour
  - An increase in night pain occurs