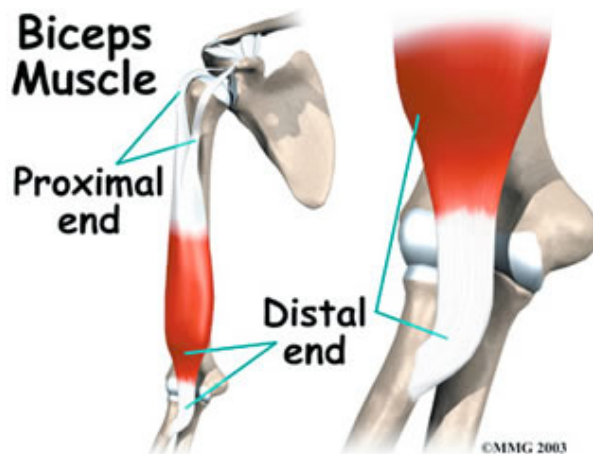


### DISTAL BICEPS REPAIR



#### **What does this surgery entail?**

This surgery is an open procedure. The surgeon will make a small incision, about 1-2 inches very close to the elbow. The torn distal biceps tendon will be identified and debrided to make the tendon as pristine as possible. Then, the tendon will be fixated onto the radius bone.

#### **Will my arm look the same after surgery and will I be able to regain full strength?**

Yes, the doctor will make sure the tension on the biceps is anatomically correct and will allow you to have symmetry and full strength after surgery once the muscle bulk is restored with physical therapy. Moving the biceps tendon down, out of the joint will not cause you permanent weakness.

#### **How long will I stay in the hospital?**

This surgery is typically done as ambulatory surgery, meaning you will go home the same day of surgery.

#### **What are the possible risks and complications of surgery?**

As with any surgery there is a risk of nerve damage, bleeding, and postoperative infection, however, these are very rare. Specific risks and complications include but aren't limited to re-tear, post-op stiffness, and continued pain.

#### **When can I drive?**

You may not drive while taking pain medication or while wearing a sling/brace.

#### **When can I start to run or return to sports?**

Running does produce stress on the joint, and will be detrimental to the healing process. You can ride a recumbent bike a couple weeks after surgery and after a few months you can progress to Elliptical machine without arm motions. You should avoid running for the first 3 months. Return to sport will be based on your progress with physical therapy and sport of choice. Typically, a 6 month period of rehabilitation is required for full function to return. Working hard in physical therapy, and strictly following the exercise program may shorten this process

## What is the recovery period like?

- Brace/Sling
  - o Immediately after surgery, you will have an ace wrap on the elbow and a hinged elbow brace. Brace should be locked at 90 degrees. The ace wrap you will wear for 2 days.  
**The brace you will wear, day and night, for 6 weeks.**
- Precautions
  - o DO NOT BEAR WEIGHT on the surgical arm.
  - o **Avoid active movement of the elbow for the first 6 weeks.** DO NOT bend or straighten the elbow using your own muscles.
- Physical Therapy
  - o You will **start formal PT** just prior to, or just after your first post-op visit. The day after surgery, you will receive a call from the office and we will let you know when to start PT.
    - Please be proactive and have a PT facility in mind prior to surgery. Please contact the office for recommended PT offices.
  - o You will go 2x/week for about 6 months.
    - The therapist will passively move your arm while you keep your muscles relaxed. After six weeks, you will begin active motion in the elbow, followed by a progressive strengthening program.
  - o Dedication and attendance to your sessions are critical to your recovery.
  - o Prior to starting, and in addition to formal PT, do the following home exercises:
    - Ball Squeeze: perform 4 times daily.
      - Grip a small ball or small rolled up towel and squeeze it with your hand. Hold 3 seconds, relax. Repeat x 10.
    - Wrist range of motion: Repeat x 10. Perform 4 times daily.
      - Circles with your wrist, clockwise (CW) and counter-clockwise (CCW).
      - Start with your hand open, palm up. Turn palm down.
    - Finger Abduction: Repeat x 10. Perform 4 times daily.
      - Start with a fist, then spread fingers out as far as they will go.
    - Finger opposition combo: Repeat x 10. Perform 4 times daily.
      - Start with an open palm and fingers extended. Next, touch the tips of each finger to your thumb.
    - Pendulums: Perform clockwise and counter-clockwise. Repeat x10. Perform 4 times daily.
      - While standing, bend at the hips so your back is parallel to the floor. Hold on to a table or chair with the uninvolved arm to maintain balance. Rock the body causing the involved arm to gently swing.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR IMMEDIATELY AFTER SURGERY:

- Activity
  - Apply ice to your shoulder but keep the bandages dry
  - Use pillows to maintain comfort.
  - **Follow the precaution guidelines above.**
  - Start your home exercise program
- Bandage and Incision Care
  - In addition to the brace, you will also have an ace wrap- leave this dressing on for the first 2-3 days. You may then remove the dressing. Underneath will be several waterproof bandaids. Keep these bandaids in place. However, if the bandaids become wet, dirty, or start to peel off, then replace with Nexcare waterproof bandaids. Under the bandaids is Dermabond, this is a surgical glue and tape that is used in conjunction with absorbable sutures to close the incision. Do not touch the Dermabond.
  - Keep incisions dry and clean.
  - Do not apply creams, ointments, or lotions to your incisions for at least 3 weeks.
- Showering
  - You may shower at any time. You must keep brace on to shower, but it needs to stay dry. Put a garbage bag over the arm and wrap saran wrap at the top to ensure a waterproof seal.
  - **Do not get the incision or brace wet.** Be careful in the shower, do not use your surgical arm. If you take a bath, do not submerge the shoulder.
- Pain Management and Cold Therapy
  - See POST-OP PAIN MANAGEMENT handout. After 2 weeks, you should only be taking the pain medication at night and before physical therapy if needed.
- Normal sensations after surgery
  - Pain
  - Swelling and warmth up to 2 weeks
  - Small amounts of bloody drainage for first few days
  - Numbness around the incision area
  - Bruising
  - Low grade temperature less than 101.0 for up to 2 days after surgery.
  - Small amount of redness to the area where the sutures insert in the skin
- **IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING OCCUR, CONTACT THE OFFICE IMMEDIATELY**
  - Change is noted to your incision (i.e. increased redness or drainage)
  - Temperature greater than 101.0
  - Fever, chills, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
  - Sutures become loose or fall out and incision becomes open
  - Drainage becomes yellow, puss like or foul smelling
  - Increased pain unrelieved by medication or measures mentioned above.
- Post-op visit
  - Please ensure that you have a post-op visit scheduled for 7-14 days after surgery. Please arrive 30-45 minutes prior to your appointment time to obtain X-rays.