

Elbow Dislocation Conservative Rehabilitation Protocol

After Reduction:

- Expect elbow to be placed in an immobilization splint and sling for 1 week post reduction.
- Strict RICE: Rest, Ice, Compression, and Elevation for 1 week. (Elevate above your heart.)
- Neurovascular checks first 24 hours.
- Shower with a plastic bag covering the splint and seal with tape.
- Take your pain medication as needed and as prescribed. Call if any problems or questions arise.

Considerations:

- Avoid passive ROM exercises for 6 weeks. (Active Range of Motion (ROM) and Active Assist ROM exercises are OK at 1 week, or when given approval by M.D.)

1 Week Post Reduction:

- Follow up in clinic
- Expect a hinged brace that limits extension to 30° to wear for 4-6 weeks.
- Gentle progressive resistance exercises OK.
- In supine position, allow gentle extension to predetermined stability while keeping forearm pronated (palm down).
- Perform flexion exercises in supine position with elbow in overhead position.
- Perform extension exercises in sitting position.
- **At therapy:**
 1. begin active-assist ROM and active supination/pronation as well as flexion/extension exercises (usually 2 weeks after reduction and 6 weeks after surgical reconstruction).

6Weeks Post Reduction:

- Follow up appointment in clinic
- Discontinue hinged elbow brace
- Begin progressive functional and sport-specific resistive strengthening exercises.

12 Weeks Post Reduction:

- Follow up appointment in clinic
- Progressive activities as tolerated.

Considerations:

- 5-15% of patients report a loss of elbow strength.
- Many patients may still experience discomfort during loading procedures.