

## Thumb MCP Joint Ulnar Collateral Ligament Repair (Gamekeeper's Thumb) Post Operative Rehabilitation Protocol

### Following Surgery:

- Expect a bulky compressive dressing and splint to be kept in place for 10-14 days.
- Elevate and ice for at least 3 days.
- Continue to elevate as often as possible until your next clinic visit. (Elevate above your heart.)
- Shower with a plastic bag covering the splint and seal with tape.
- Take your pain medicine as needed and as prescribed. Call if any problems or questions arise.

### Precautions:

- Care must be taken to avoid weighted resistance and lateral stress (sustained forceful pinch) to the MCP joint during exercise sessions and with dynamic flexion for 8-12 weeks.

### 2 Weeks Post Op:

- Follow up appointment in clinic.
- Sutures and splint will be removed.
- Patient will be placed in a forearm-based thumb spica cast.
- Only gentle motion of the thumb tip allowed.

### 4 Weeks Post Op:

- Follow up appointment in clinic.
- Therapist will fit patient with a forearm-based thumb spica splint allowing motion of thumb tip.
- Gentle active Range of Motion (ROM) of the thumb MCP and IP joints initiated including palmar abduction, adduction, and circumduction, as well as flexion and extension of the thumb and wrist. (Your therapist will explain these.)
- Passive ROM exercises initiated to all joints of the thumb.
- Dynamic flexion splinting may be initiated to increase passive thumb MCP and IP joint mobility.
- The wrist and thumb static splint may be revised to a short opponens splint with the IP free.

### 8 Weeks Post Op:

- May discontinue splint; initiate strengthening with putty and a hand exerciser.
- Activities requiring weighted resistance or sustained power pinch should be avoided until 8-12 weeks.

### 16 Weeks Post Op:

- Follow up appointment in clinic.
- Return to unrestricted use of the hand in most activities.
- Patients interested in returning to sports may consider wearing the short opponens splint for thumb protection.

