



obermeyermd.com

O: 847-285-4318

F: 847-885-0130

Self-Directed Home Exercise Program

Elbow Stretching

Introduction: Recovering from an injury or surgery to the elbow requires balancing healing and tissue recovery with motion, because not moving the joint can lead to scarring and stiffness. To promote range of motion while protecting from injury, these exercises should only be performed with discomfort and not frank pain. Initially you should remove the sling and have the elbow supported on a table or surface, progressing to motion with the arm unsupported as tolerated. You can use your healthy uninjured arm to gently push the elbow in these positions until discomfort is felt.

Instructions: Perform these exercises daily in 20-30 minute sessions 2-3 times per day. Prior to exercise, heat on the elbow at the location of pain and ice after may help.



Extension: Getting the arm fully straight during recovery can be the most challenging of any elbow position. Initially as shown, straighten the elbow off a table with gravity or a light weight pulling it down. As motion improves and pain resolves, try stretching the arm with it unsupported and using the other hand to pull the elbow maximally into extension.





Flexion: Maximally bend the elbow until you experience mild discomfort. Initially just use your injured arm muscles and then as tolerated you can assist getting the arm more bent with the other hand. First try getting your thumb to your mouth, then your thumb to your throat, and finally the crook between the thumb and index finger to your throat.

Pronation: Keep your elbow bent at a right angle and against your side. Maximally turn your hand so the palm faces the floor. Try to make sure your arm does not pull away from your side. Gently progress until the palm is fully parallel to the floor.



Supination: Keep your elbow bent at a right angle and against your side as above. Maximally turn your hand so the palm faces the ceiling. Use the other hand to gently assist. Progress until the palm is fully parallel to the floor.