Radial Head Replacement/Fixation Protocol
Radial Head Replacement/Fixation

Mr. Matthan Mammen
MS, FRACS (Orth)
Orthopaedic Surgeon

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sling</th>
<th>When will I go home?</th>
<th>What can I do?</th>
<th>What can’t I do?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 weeks</td>
<td>You will be discharged on the same day as the operation</td>
<td>Gentle elbow range of movement</td>
<td>No lifting, no pushing, no pulling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Acute phase (0-4 weeks)**

Goals
- Pain and oedema control while protecting healing tissues
- Prevent joint contractures
- Independence and compliance in splint wear

Rehabilitation
- Progression from gravity assisted elbow extension, to active assist, to active range of movement of elbow extension
- Active range of movement of shoulder, wrist, and hand
- Light putty exercises for grip once full ROM of digits is restored
- Oedema control
- No lifting, pushing, pulling

Criteria for progression
- Pain control

**Intermediate phase (4-8 weeks)**

Goals
- Restore ROM in elbow

Rehabilitation
- Advance to elbow flexion after 4 weeks
- Increase elbow range of movement including supination & pronation
- If >20 degrees lack of extension or elbow flexion <130 degrees at 8 weeks add a static elbow brace

**Late phase (>8 weeks)**

Goals
- Restore full range of movement in elbow

Rehabilitation
- Home exercise program to maintain range of movement, strength, proprioception and function
### Guidelines for return to functional activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Driving</th>
<th>Lifting</th>
<th>Swimming</th>
<th>Golf</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 weeks</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
<td>3 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>