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Rehabilitation Protocol Nonoperative Radial Head Fracture

Phase I: Immobilization (3-7 days)

Sling should be worn for comfort for only 3-7 days.

- Grip and wrist/hand AROM immediately.
- Begin putty/grip exercises

Phase II: Early ROM (1 to 2 weeks)

- Remove sling at all times
- Initiate elbow exercise program 5 times per day:
 - Passive and active elbow ROM as tolerated:
 - flexion/extension/pronation/supination
 - ROM by end of 2nd week should be at least 15 to 115 degrees
 - Begin putty/grip exercises
 - Begin isometric strengthening exercises for the elbow and wrist

Phase III: Increase ROM and function (2 to 6 weeks)

- Continue elbow active and active assisted ROM exercises.
- Full flexion and extension should be achieved by the end of 6 weeks.
- Begin light isotonic strengthening of flexion and extension
- Assess and maintain shoulder and wrist strength and ROM

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Phase IV: Full ROM and function (>6 weeks)

- Full pronation and supination should be achieved by the end of the 8th week.
- Progressively increase isotonic strengthening in flexion/extension and pronation/supination.
- Work on any deficits.