

## **GUIDELINES FOR EXTENSOR TENDON REPAIRS ZONES III and IV**

### **Early Active Short Arc Motion (SAM) Protocol as developed by Evans and Thompson**

#### **3 - 5 days postop**

1. Orthosis fabrication:
  - a. A volar orthosis is created for involved digit keeping PIP and DIP at 0 degrees
  - b. To be worn at **all times** except when performing exercises
2. Two template orthoses provided
  - a. Template orthosis #1
    - i. Allow 30 degrees of PIP **flexion**
    - ii. Allow 20-25 degrees of DIP **flexion**
  - b. Template orthosis #2
    - i. PIP in 0 degrees of extension
    - ii. Orthosis allows for DIP flexion
      1. Full DIP flexion is allowed if lateral bands were **not** repaired
      2. If lateral bands **were** repaired **limit** DIP flexion to 30-35 degrees
3. Exercises: performed every hour 20 repetitions with each template orthosis
  - a. Wrist positioned in 30 degrees of **flexion**
  - b. With template orthosis #2 emphasize support at the PIP to keep in neutral position
  - c. After each repetition, extend finger fully and hold for 5 seconds

#### **2 weeks postop**

1. If there is **no** extension lag at the PIP when performing 30 degrees of flexion, adjust orthosis #1 to allow 40 degrees of flexion

#### **4 weeks postop**

1. If there is **no** extension lag at the PIP when performing 40 degrees of flexion, adjust orthosis #1 to allow 50 degrees of flexion

#### **6 weeks postop**

1. Orthoses are typically discontinued at this point.
2. HEP can begin to incorporate strengthening activities

#### **8 weeks postop**

1. Pt can begin using hand for light activities
2. Progress strengthening exercises

#### **Considerations**

Monitor for extension lag throughout all stages of therapy