

Occupational Therapy Toolkit

Cubital Tunnel Syndrome (Ulnar Neuropathy)

Functional Limitations:

ADL, IADL, work and leisure impairment
Numbness and tingling in the little and ring fingers
Impaired coordination
Hand weakness
Medial elbow pain with radiation down the forearm

Assessments:

Elbow flexion test of Wadsworth - hold both elbows in full flexion with full extension of the wrists

A positive test will produce numbness and tingling in the ring and little fingers
The symptoms should resolve after release of full flexion

Occupational Therapy Intervention:

ADL, IADL, work and leisure training including but not limited to...

Recommend and/or provide adaptive equipment and alternative methods to compensate for weak grasp

Instruct in elbow joint protection techniques (avoid of prolonged elbow flexion or repetitive flexion, Avoid resting the elbows on hard surfaces, provide patient with gel pads to protect elbow)

Provide positioning at night in 70° elbow flexion using towel wrapped around the elbow or a custom splint

Provide elbow/forearm stretching activities and exercise to increase ROM

Provide progressive elbow/forearm strengthening activities and exercises to increase strength

Instruct in pain management techniques.

Teach stress management and relaxation techniques, instruct in coordinating medication peak with exercise and activity, educate in use of heat and cold

Patient Education:

1. Superficial Heat
2. Superficial Cold
3. Home Exercise Program Face Sheet
4. Elbow/Forearm/Wrist Stretching
5. Elbow/Forearm/Wrist Active ROM Exercises
6. Elbow/Forearm/Wrist Strengthening Exercises
7. Stress Management and Relaxation Techniques