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Effects of Early Mobilization in the Recovery of Athletes Post-Open TFCC Surgery

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The Triangular Fibrocartilage Complex (TFCC) is one of the crucial stabilizing ligaments of the wrist. The TFCC is also subject to excessive stress amongst performance athletes, sportsmen and fitness enthusiasts. The excessive loading of the TFCC may lead to a partial or complete rupture that requires surgery.

The recovery from an open TFCC surgical repair may take several months. Immobilization of the repaired wrist for a given period is part of all the current protocols in the post-surgical treatment. The immobilization to prevent the rotation of the forearm, can last from six weeks to eight weeks with the wrist held in a neutral position. In all protocols reviewed, the pronosupination is only initiated between the 6th week and 8th week or even later after the cast is removed.

The prolonged immobilization can cause stiffness of the wrist and hand. Furthermore, the entire period of post-surgical hand therapy has its economic impact, especially for performing athletes. However, delayed mobilization, specifically rotation of the wrist, is necessary to allow ligament healing. On the other hand, early mobilization of the wrist post-surgery can be more beneficial to the patient as opposed to the traditional prolonged immobilization.

Since athletes are evidently able to withstand vigorous physical stress in their training, the same was assumed for their ability to cope with the progressive stress implemented during their hand therapy. This case study presents a few professional athletes who have undergone hand therapy regimen that promoted early mobilization a few days after the open TFCC repair

Biography

Arthur "Blair" Agero Jr. finished his degree of Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy at the age of 18 years from the University of Perpetual Help System – DALTA in Manila, Philippines. He acquired a Post-graduate Certificate in Hand Therapy from Derbyshire University, United Kingdom. He has 22 cumulative years of therapy practice, more than half of which has been focused on Orthopedic Hand Therapy in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. He is the official representative of the UAE to the International Federation of Societies for Hand Therapy (IFSHT). He is a member of both ASHT and BAHT.