

# FULL CIRCLE HAND THERAPY

YOU'RE IN GOOD HANDS



## DISTAL BICEPS RUPTURE

The biceps is a two part muscle on the front of your arm that has a proximal (near the shoulder) and a distal (near the elbow) portion. The biceps bends the elbow and turns the palm of the hand up toward the ceiling as if holding change or opening a door. A distal biceps rupture is when the portion of the biceps that attaches in the lower arm tears away from the bone.

## CAUSES

A common cause for a distal biceps rupture is usually trauma involving the elbow. For example, when a person attempts to pick up a heavy load, such as a box, and it is heavier than expected, the bent elbow is forcefully straightened against the lifting force causing the muscle to tear. A distal biceps rupture may also occur as a result of a fall or accident.

## SYMPTOMS

A distal biceps rupture can cause pain and bruising on the front of the arm. Some individuals hear a "pop" and see a small ball or mass on the front of the arm. There may also be weakness when turning the palm up from a down position with activities such as using a screw driver.

## TREATMENT

There are two types of distal biceps ruptures, a partial rupture and a full rupture. A partial distal biceps rupture means that some of the muscle remains attached to the bone in the lower arm near the elbow. Partial distal biceps ruptures are usually treated non-surgically. Treatment may include medication for pain, rest of the arm with a sling and hand therapy. A full rupture means the muscle has totally pulled away from the bone near elbow, and is repaired with surgery. Surgery involves reattaching the distal biceps to the bone, and precise therapy to ensure a great outcome.

Site of a distal biceps rupture



## HOW CAN WE HELP?

For the individual who does not have surgery, we can help reduce pain, decrease swelling maintain full motion of the elbow and provide strengthening of the muscles of the elbow and shoulder. After surgery, we help to reduce swelling and pain and increase movement of the elbow, wrist and hand. Usually a protective orthosis will be fabricated, and specific exercises will be prescribed to gradually increase your range of motion. It will take time to fully recover, so we will assist in modifying activities until it is safe to return to forceful activities, such as heavy lifting.