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**Pseudo-Boutonniere Deformity**

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**REHABILITATION PROTOCOL**

**Description of Diagnosis**

* The term “pseudo-boutonniere” is used to classify a group of PIP hyperextension injuries that present with a boutonniere-like appearance. With the pseudo-boutonniere deformity, there is a PIP joint flexion contracture with the DIP joint positioned in extension. With a pseudo-boutonniere, the DIP joint is passively flexible with the PIP joint extended. With a true boutonniere deformity, the oblique retinacular ligament is tight. Therefore, passive flexion of the DIP joint is not possible. With the pseudo-boutonniere deformity, the extensor mechanism has not been damaged, but the volar plate (proximal attachment) has been avulsed with scarring in the flexed posture.

**Conservative Management – Therapy**

* If a flexion contracture is present at the PIP joint, dynamic extension splinting and/or progressive static splinting is initiated until a full passive PIP joint extension is achieved.
* The patient is instructed in unrestricted active and PROM exercises of the digit. Once full passive PIP joint extension is achieved to neutral, a cylinder cast is fitted to the PIP joint for continuous wear, while leaving the DIP joint free for active and PROM.
* Active and PROM exercises are continued to the DIP joint to prevent lightness of oblique retinacular ligament.

**6 Weeks**

* Once the PIP joint has been immobilized at neutral for a period of 6 weeks, active and PROM exercises are initiated 6-8 times a day for 10 minute sessions.
* Extension splinting is continued between exercise sessions and at night with a cylinder cast or extension gutter splint to the PIP joint.

**7 Weeks**

* PROM exercises are initiated.
* Taping and/or dynamic splint may be initiated to increase passive flexion to the PIP joint.

**8 Weeks**

* The extension gutter splint is gradually reduced during the day. Typically, it is reduced one hour each day with the goal of completely discontinuing the day splint by 9-10 weeks.

**10 Weeks**

* The extension gutter splint is discontinued at night.