

## **TOTAL ELBOW REPLACEMENT**

### **Therapy Guide**

- Commonly for RA to reduce pain and improve ROM & function
- Dorsal longitudinal incision
- Bulky dressing with POP backslab
- Elevation of hand and arm for 2 weeks
- Early hand and wrist ROM exercises
- POP backslab removed at 3 days and replaced with thermoplastic forearm-based extension splint. To wear at night and for comfort for 6 weeks
- **No active triceps** for 6 weeks

#### **Exercises – To be done every hour**

- Full fist to fully straight hand x10
- Wrist up and down x20
- Active elbow flexion with passive extension (i.e., eccentric biceps) x10
- Sustained elbow flexion with overpressure using other hand x3 mins
- Sustained elbow extension with overpressure using other hand x3 mins
- Supination with elbow at 90° tucked into side
- Scar massage x 5 minutes once wound has healed
- Use weight to help stretch into extension and hold up to 5 minutes

#### **Look out for**

- Inability to actively straighten arm (triceps may have pulled off)
- If poor ROM then contact Hand Therapy at the RUH – may come in for intensive Physio
- Infection – send to GP urgently for antibiotics and refer back to next clinic
- Numbness or wrist drop. Can be radial or ulnar nerve disruption.