



Brian P. Davis, MD  
ABOS Board-Certified Sports Medicine,  
Shoulder, Knee, & Elbow Surgeon  
office: 303.321.1333  
BrianDavisMD.com

## Physical Therapy Non-Operative Protocol Ulnar Collateral Ligament (UCL) Sprain

---

### Phase I – Acute & Inflammatory Phase:

- Modalities to control inflammation:
  - Prescription anti-inflammatories
  - Ice
  - Clinical modalities as needed
- Active Range of Motion Exercises:
  - Elbow & wrist all planes
- Early scapular strengthening:
  - Begin scapular stabilization with appropriate instruction in mid and lower trapezius facilitation
- Isometric strengthening of the shoulder, elbow, and wrist

### Phase II – Subacute & Early Resistive Phase:

- Continue with modalities and range of motion as outlined in Phase I
- Initiate rotator cuff strengthening (PREs), **avoiding extensive valgus forces at the elbow:**
- Initiate resistive elbow and wrist strengthening as tolerated

### Phase III – Advanced Strengthening:

- Continue with Phase II advancing rotator cuff and scapular strengthening program with the addition of a push-up progression, **avoiding extensive valgus force at the elbow:**
- Initiate gym strengthening program
- Begin two-handed plyoball drills, advancing to one-handed
- Begin interval hitting program

### Phase IV – Return to Sport:

- Continue with Phase III program
- Advance interval hitting program
- Begin interval throwing program based on:
  - Negative clinical examination
  - No pain or tenderness
  - > 90% strength tests for shoulder, elbow, wrist, and hand
- Re-evaluation with physician and therapist

This protocol is intended to provide a general guideline to treating an ulnar collateral (UCL) sprain. Progress should be modified on an individual basis.