



ACL Reconstruction/Repair Post-Operative Protocol

PHASE 1 (Weeks 0-6)

** (If meniscal or cartilage repair is performed, this protocol will be delayed 4-6 weeks)*

PHASE GOALS: PROTECT GRAFT, AMBULATION, DAILY ACTIVITIES

RANGE OF MOTION

- 0-1 WEEK – REMAIN IN BRACE, CRUTCHES WITH NON-WEIGHT BEARING, OBTAIN FULL EXTENSION.
- 1+ WEEKS – MAINTAIN FULL EXTENSION & GRADUALLY PROGRESS TO FULL FLEXION

WEIGHT BEARING

- 1-2 WEEKS – BEGIN WEIGHT-BEARING AS TOLERATED IN BRACE (LOCKED IN EXTENSION UNTIL CLEARED BY PHYSICAL THERAPY)
- 2+ WEEKS - FULL WEIGHT BEARING WITH SYMMETRICAL GAIT IN HINGED BRACE (PHYSICAL THERAPY TO DETERMINE WHEN BRACE WILL BE UNLOCKED.)

STRENGTHENING

- QUAD SETS, STRAIGHT LEG RAISES, HIP ABDUCTION
- BALANCING, PRE-GAIT, CALF RAISES

CRITERIA FOR FULL AMBULATION

- > 0 DEG KNEE EXTENSION & 90 DEG KNEE FLEXION
- > 30 STRAIGHT LEG RAISES WITHOUT LAG
- MINIMAL EFFUSION, PAIN, & SYMMETRICAL GAIT WITHOUT A LIMP
- MD OR PHYSICAL THERAPIST APPROVAL

PHASE 2 (Weeks 6-12)

PHASE GOALS: CONTINUE ACL PROTECTION, STRENGTHENING, CONDITIONING

RANGE OF MOTION

- 6+ WEEKS - SYMMETRICAL & PAIN-FREE MOTION COMPARED TO OPOSITE KNEE

STRENGTHENING

- LEG PRESS, STEP-UPS, & ROMANIAN DEADLIFTS (RDLs)
- SQUAT PROGRESSION (BODYWEIGHT SQUATS → SINGLE LEG SQUATS)
- RESISTED HIP ABDUCTION LATERAL BAND WALKS
- CORE EXERCISES (PLANKS, V-UPS, SINGLE-LEG BRIDGE)

CONDITIONING- *only when can be performed with minimal pain (3 out of 10) and flexion 110°+*

- STATIONARY BIKE
- ELLIPTICAL
- SWIMMING

PHASE 2 JOGGING (weeks 9-12)- *jogging to begin only if the following criteria have been met*

- PAIN NEVER MORE THAN 3/10
- NORMAL KNEE EXTENSION & 120° KNEE FLEXION
- QUADRICEPS & HAMSTRING STRENGTH > 60% NORMAL
- LESS THAN 3" DEFICIT ON SINGLE-LEG SQUAT
- AT LEAST 1 MINUTE OF SINGLE LEG SQUATS
- MD OR PT APPROVAL

PHASE 3 (weeks 12-20)

PHASE GOALS: DYNAMIC AND AGILITY

RANGE OF MOTION

- 12+ WEEKS – MAINTAIN FULL RANGE OF MOTION

STRENGTHENING

- GYM STRENGTHENING (SQUATS, LEG PRESS, DEADLIFTS)
- CORE EXERCISES (MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS, PLANKS, V-UPS, LUNGES)

CONDITIONING

- BIKING, ELLIPTICAL, JOGGING, SWIMMING & ROWING

PLYOMETRICS & LIGHT AGILITY

- LADDER DRILLS, FOOTWORK AGILITIES, PROPER LANDING TECHNIQUES
- BOX JUMPS (DOUBLE & SINGLE LEG)

PHASE 4 – (6-8 months)

PHASE GOALS: INITIATE SPORTS SPECIFIC MOVEMENTS & RETURN TO PLAY

STRENGTHENING

- PROGRESS GYM STRENGTHENING (SQUATS, DEADLIFTS, & OLYMPIC LIFTING)

CONDITIONING

- JOGGING, BIKING, SWIMMING, & INTERVAL SPRINT WORKOUTS

PLYOMETRICS & AGILITY (2-3 DAYS/WEEK)

- MAX EFFORT BOX JUMPS
- LATERAL & ROTATIONAL MOVEMENT WITH CONTROL
- UNPREDICTABLE CUTTING AGILITY & CONTACT DRILLS

EACH ATHLETE WILL HAVE RE-EVALUATION BY PHYSICAL THERAPIST FOR RETURN TO SPORT EVALUATION PRIOR TO FULL RELEASE TO SPORT.

CUSTOM BRACE WILL BE WORN DURING PLAY FOR 1 FULL YEAR UPON RETURN TO SPORT