

ACL Reconstruction with Meniscus Repair

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Post-Operative Protocol

Phase I – Maximum Protection (Weeks 0 to 6):

- Brace – six weeks, locked in extension while ambulating for 6 weeks
- Ambulation
 - Crutches x 6 weeks
 - 0-2 weeks – TTWB, brace locked in extension
 - 2-4 weeks – 50% WB, brace locked in extension
 - 4-6 weeks – 75% WB, brace locked in extension

Goals

- Reduce inflammation
- Normalize patella mobility with manual mobilizations
- full extension
- 90° of knee flexion limitation x 4-6 weeks (per physicians orders)

Exercise progression

- Quadriceps setting using NMES as needed
- Multi-plane straight leg raising
- Open and closed chain multi-plane hip strengthening after FWB
- Lower extremity stretching
- Core strengthening
- Proprioception drills
- Gait training
- Deep water pool program with 90° limit once incisions are healed

Phase II – Progressive Stretching and Early Strengthening (Weeks 4 to 6):

Goals

- Reduce inflammation
- Full knee extension/hyperextension
- Knee flexion – gradually progressing to full
- Normalize patellofemoral joint and scar mobility

Exercise progression

- Multi-plane open and closed kinetic chain hip strengthening
- Stationary biking
- Proprioception drills

Phase III – Advanced Strengthening / Endurance Training (Weeks 6 to 12):

Weeks 6 to 10:

Goals

- Full knee flexion and extension
- Progressive strengthening
- Increase muscular endurance

Exercise progression

- Leg press, squats (above 90°)
- hamstrings curls
- Increase intensity of stationary bike program, treadmill walking and elliptical
- Advance intensity of deep water pool program; focus on endurance training

Weeks 10 to 12:

Exercise progression

- Outdoor biking
- Lunge progression (retro, walk and split) as indicated
- Lateral lunge progression
- Swimming free style
- Forward/backward elevated treadmill walking

Phase IV – Advance Strengthening / Running progression (Weeks 12 to 28):

Exercise progression – (Weeks 12-24)

- Progress resistance with squat and lunge strengthening program, may add leg extensions at 30° - 0° (exclude patients with patellar or trochlear groove chondral pathology)
- Shallow water pool running progression – week 12
 - Basic ladder series – week 12
- Linear running progression – week 16
- Basic plyometric box progression – week 16
- Fit functional brace (if used) –week 18

Return to Sport and Functional Drills Phase (Weeks 24 to 28)

- Interval golf program
- Advance ladder, hurdle and plyo box progressions
- Sport specific field/court drills with brace on
- Non-contact drills

Sports test and follow-up with physician

- Follow-up examination with the physician
- Sports test for return to competition at 7-9 months

Return to full sports participation without restrictions is anticipated at approximately 7-9 months depending on sport