

Physical Therapy Protocol
PCL Reconstruction

Preoperative

Brace: As needed

Weight Bearing: Full, crutches as necessary

ROM Goals:

Extension: Full, supported

Flexion: 135 degrees

Therapeutic Exercise: Learn exercises for postoperative regimen

Postoperative Rehabilitation Protocol

Weeks 0 to 4: Protective Phase

Brace: Braced in full extension

Weight Bearing: Touch down to 40%

ROM Goals:

Extension: Full with posterior leg supported at all times to protect from tibial sag

Flexion: 60 degrees

Therapeutic Exercise:

Strengthening:

Ankle ROM

Quadriceps setting

Three-way leg raises in brace (not flexion)

Functional quadriceps electric stimulation

**No open chain hamstring strengthening

Manual Therapy:

Patella and joint mobilization

Passive knee flexion to 60 degrees with anterior tibial force

Peri-patellar soft tissue mobilization

Cryotherapy: Six to eight times a day for 20 minutes

Weeks 5 to 8: Early Strengthening Phase

Brace: Open to 30 degrees weeks 5 and 6; open to 60 degrees weeks 7 and 8.

Weight Bearing: Progress to full by week 8

ROM Goals:

Extension: Full

Flexion: 90 degrees week 6, progressing to 110 degrees by week 8

Therapeutic Exercise:

Strengthening:

Ankle ROM and strengthening

Quadriceps setting

Four-way Straight leg raising in brace

Mini squats weeks 7 and 8 (0-45 degrees)

Step downs weeks 7 and 8 (0-45 degrees)

**No open chain hamstring strengthening

Posterior Cruciate Ligament (PCL) Reconstruction

Weeks 5 to 8: Early Strengthening Phase (cont.)

Proprioception: One leg balance

Core: Abdominal and lumbar exercises

Manual Therapy:

Patella and joint mobilization

Passive knee flexion to 90 degrees **with anterior tibial force

Peri-patellar soft tissue mobilization

Prone quadriceps stretching to 90 degrees

Weeks 9 to 12: Advanced Strengthening Phase

Brace: Open

Weight Bearing: Full

ROM Goals:

Extension: Full

Flexion: Progress to full

Therapeutic Exercise:

Strengthening:

Quadriceps setting

Four-way straight leg raising in brace

Half squats weeks 10 to 12 (0-90 degrees)

Step downs weeks 10 to 12

Slow progression of multi-plane closed chain activities

**No open chain hamstring strengthening

Proprioception: Wobble and BAPS boards

Core: Standing trunk activities

Conditioning: UBE/Bike (minimum resistance)

Manual Therapy:

Patellar mobilization

Passive knee flexion to 125 degrees with anterior tibial force

Peri-patellar soft tissue mobilization

Prone quadriceps stretching to 125 degrees

Soft tissue flexibility maintenance

12 Plus Weeks: Functional Training and Return to Sports Phase

Brace: Functional brace worn

Therapeutic Exercise:

Strengthening:

Sport specific activities begun at 9 months

Progression of multi-plane closed chain activities

Conditioning: Running straight at 6 months

Proprioception: Single leg activities

Advanced Core Strengthening: Functional standing trunk activities

Note: Return to sport based on provider team input and appropriate testing.

All times and exercises are to serve as guidelines. Actual progress may be faster or slower, depending on each individual patient, as agreed upon by the patient and his/her team of providers.

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