



THE ORTHOPEDIC PARTNERS
AN RCM CLINIC

PARK CITY • HEBER CITY • SALT LAKE CITY

ACL HEALING RESPONSE POST-OPERATIVE PROTOCOL

PHASE I – MAXIMUM PROTECTION

WEEKS 0-2

- Brace: Locked at 10° until first follow up appointment with surgeon.
- Non-Weight bearing utilizing crutches for ambulation until first follow up with surgeon.
- Exercises:
 - Quadriceps setting, focusing on VMO
 - Multi-plane straight leg raising
 - Gait training, edema control
- Weightbearing as tolerated once cleared by physician. The patient may discontinue the crutches when they can ambulate with no limp.
- Range of Motion:
 - Patella mobility
 - Emphasize full extension (avoid hyperextension x 4-6 weeks)
 - Progress to full flexion as tolerated
- Exercises:
 - Quadriceps setting, focusing on VMO
 - Multi-plane straight leg raising
 - Gait training, edema control

PHASE II – PROGRESSIVE STRETCHING AND EARLY STRENGTHENING

WEEKS 2-4

- Range of Motion:
 - Patella mobility and scar massage
 - Full knee extension (avoid hyperextension x 4-6 weeks)
 - Full knee flexion, progress as tolerated
- Exercises:
 - Bilateral closed kinetic chain squatting
 - Multi-plane open and closed kinetic chain hip strengthening
 - Step-up progression
 - Stationary biking
 - Pool program: deep water cycling and straight leg flutter kicks, shallow water walking
 - Proprioception drills

WEEKS 4-6

- Exercises:



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- Advance strengthening program progressing to unilateral as tolerated
- Increase intensity of stationary bike program, may add treadmill walking and/or elliptical

PHASE III – ADVANCED STRENGTHENING AND PROPRIOCEPTION PHASE

WEEKS 6-10

- Brace: wean out as tolerated
- Range of Motion:
 - Full knee flexion and hyper-extension with terminal stretch (active and passive)
- Exercises:
 - Advance intensity of cardiovascular program; no running
 - Increase intensity of closed kinetic chain exercises
 - Advance proprioception drills
 - Gym program – no extensions
 - Begin lateral functional cord work; no rotation

WEEKS 8-10

- Exercises:
 - Pool running program