

MENISCUS ROOT REPAIR POST-OPERATIVE PROTOCOL

PHASE I – MAXIMUM PROTECTION

WEEKS 0-2:

- Use crutches **non-weight bearing for 6 weeks**
- Hold ROM x 2 weeks
- **Brace: locked at 10 degrees x 6 weeks**
- Exercises:
 - Goal = Patella mobility
 - Begin passive/active knee range of motion to 90° of knee flexion and strong emphasis on full knee extension
 - Quadriceps setting focusing on VMO contraction
 - Multi-plane open kinetic chain straight leg raising
 - Gait training with crutches

WEEKS 2-6:

- Exercises:
 - Open and closed kinetic chain resisted cord multi-plane hip strengthening
 - Proprioception training
 - Pool program when incision sites healed; maintain 90° flexion limitation

PHASE II – PROGRESSIVE STRETCHING AND EARLY STRENGTHENING

WEEKS 6-8:

- Continue to use crutches **non-weight bearing for 6 weeks**
- Wean off crutches over weeks 6-8
 - May discontinue with crutches when they can ambulate without a limp
- Brace: Open brace per physician's orders
- Exercises:
 - Gradually restore full range of motion with emphasis on extension/hyperextension
 - Initiate lower extremity stretching program
 - Stationary bike, treadmill, and/or elliptical trainer
 - Closed kinetic chain strengthening progressing from bilateral to unilateral as tolerated

PHASE III – ADVANCED STRENGTHENING AND PROPRIOCEPTION PHASE

WEEKS 8-10:

- Wean out of brace weeks after patient can safely ambulate without crutches
- Exercises:
 - Increase to full ROM as tolerated
 - Avoid load-bearing exercises > 90° flexion x 3 months
 - Gait training after weaning off crutches

WEEKS 10-12:

- Avoid load-bearing exercises > 90° flexion x 3 months
- Gym-strengthening program – Progressing from bilateral to unilateral
 - Leg press, squats, lunges, hamstring curls, ab/adduction, calf raises, and leg extensions (0° - 30°)

PHASE IV – STRENGTHENING AND PLYOMETRIC PHASE

WEEKS 12-20:

- Exercises:
 - Implement a full gym-strengthening program
 - Pool running progressing to dry land at 16 weeks as tolerated
 - Advance proprioception drills
 - Low impact plyometric drills at 16-20 weeks
- Other Considerations:
 - Fit functional brace

PHASE V – RETURN TO SPORT FUNCTIONAL PROGRAM

WEEKS 20-24:

- Exercises:
 - Sprinting
 - Field and agility drills with brace on

WEEK 24–32:

- Exercises: Sports test for return to play
- Other Considerations: Follow-up examination with physician at 6 months