



## LATERAL RETINACULAR RELEASE POST-OP PROTOCOL

### PHASE I – MAXIMUM PROTECTION

#### WEEKS 0-2:

- Lateral buttress in post-op dressing to stabilize patella
- Ice and modalities to reduce pain and inflammation:
  - Elevate the knee above the heart for the first 3-5 days
- Use crutches for 5-7 days to reduce swelling & wear straight leg brace for first 2 weeks post-op:
  - The patient may discontinue the crutches when they can walk without pain and without limping.

#### Exercises:

- Initiate patella mobility exercises in all planes, emphasis on lateral tilt
- Begin full passive/active knee range of motion
- Quadriceps setting
- Multi-plane open chain straight leg raising
- Gait training

### PHASE II – PROGRESSIVE STRETCHING AND EARLY STRENGTHENING

#### WEEKS 2-6:

- Follow up with physician at week 2 post-op:
  - The patient may discontinue the brace when they can perform a straight leg raise without extensor lag (will evaluate at 2 weeks post-op)
- Maintain program as per week 0-2:

#### Exercises:

- Continue with patella mobility exercises
- Continue with modalities to help control inflammation
- Initiate global lower extremity stretching
- Begin stationary bike, treadmill, and/or elliptical trainer as strength and swelling allow, avoiding impact activity
- Begin bilateral closed kinetic chain strengthening progressing to unilateral as tolerated
- Promote normal arthrokinematics with all closed chain exercises
- Implement reintegration exercises emphasizing core stability
- Begin closed chain multi-plane hip strengthening
- Manual lower extremity PNF patterns
- Proprioceptive drills emphasizing neuromuscular control

### PHASE III – ADVANCED STRENGTHENING AND PROPRIOCEPTION PHASE

#### WEEKS 6-10:

- Follow-up with physician at 6 weeks post-op:
- Modalities as needed
- Continue with phase II exercises as indicated

#### Exercises:



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- Advance time and intensity on cardiovascular program – no running
- Begin functional cord resistance program
- Initiate gym strengthening- bilateral progressing to unilateral as tolerated
- Leg press, squats, lunges (protected range) hamstring curls, ab/adduction, calf raises

## **PHASE IV – ADVANCED STRENGTHENING AND EARLY PLYOMETRIC DRILLS**

### **WEEKS 10-12:**

#### **Exercises:**

- Begin running program at week 12, this is based on quadriceps function, strength, swelling, and endurance
- Begin light bilateral plyometric drills

## **PHASE V – RETURN TO SPORT FUNCTIONAL PROGRAM**

### **WEEKS 12-16:**

#### **Exercises:**

- Implement sport specific multi-directional drills
- Continue with aggressive lower extremity strengthening, cardiovascular training, and flexibility
- Progress plyometric exercises to unilateral as tolerated
- Sports test for return to sport