

## ACL Reconstruction & Meniscus Repair Post-op Physical Therapy Protocol

**\*Blood Flow Restriction (BFR) encouraged at all stages**

**Weeks 0-2                      Primary goals: Eliminate swelling; ROM – full extension;  
Foot flat WB; Regain quad control**

- Foot-flat weight bearing (FFWB) x4 weeks
- Brace locked in extension for ambulation with crutches with return of active straight leg raise
- Brace locked in extension for sleep, Brace unlocked when sedentary for motion exercises
- ROM limited to 0-90, towel rolls under heel while sedentary and not doing exercises
- Patella mobilization
- Straight leg raise, heel slides, quad sets, calf towel stretch, hip abduction

**Weeks 2-4                      Primary goals: Increase total leg strength; Normalize gait**

- Foot-flat weight bearing (FFWB) x4 weeks
- Brace locked in extension for ambulation with crutches with return of active straight leg raise
- ROM 0-90, focus on terminal extension
- Emphasize patellar mobilization
- Straight leg raise, terminal extension, hip abduction, gluteal and core strengthening, ankle pumps
- Quad sets
- Abdominal isometrics

**Weeks 4-6                      Primary goals: Increase ROM; Normal ADLs;  
Increase functional capacity; Increase strength**

- Gradual full weight bearing, discontinue crutches (if possible)
- Brace may be discontinued when able to ambulate without altered gait or limp
- ROM – WNL
- Treadmill walking (if gait normal)
- Stairmaster – ipsilateral rotation and straight
- Mini squats – bilateral
- Step ups – Anterior: 4 inches gradual to 8 inches

- Step ups – Anteromedial: 4 inches gradual to 8 inches
- Step downs – Anterior & medial: 4 inches, progress to 8 inches
- Unilateral squats, stance, quad sets

**Weeks 6-12                    Primary goals: Increase functional leg strength;  
Normalize balance and proprioception**

- 2# ball toss on trampoline – unilateral stance – increase dispersion with improved control
- Balance board – unilateral – sagittal & frontal
- Step downs – posterolateral @ 8 inches
- Lunges – anterior and lateral for distance and speed (not depth)
- Increase strengthening especially in frontal and transverse planes
- Stairmaster – contralateral rotation and straight
- Sliding board
- Emphasize eccentric quad
- Continue closed chain, step ups, mini squats, leg press
- Hip abduction/adduction, calf raises

**Weeks 12-16                    Primary goals: Increase agility and speed of training; Normalize  
strength; Increase muscular endurance**

- Initiate Plyometrics
- Initiate running program (\*16 weeks for allograft)
- Initiate agility drills
- Sport specific training
- Sliding board side-side with rotation
- Lunges – anterolateral, anteromedial
- Bilateral hopping – low intensity/high volume
- Fitter side-side

**Months 4-6                    Primary goals: Gradual return to athletic activity**

- Jumping
- Unilateral hopping
- Agility drills; running, cutting
- Accelerate sport specific drills and training

**Months 6-12                    Primary goals: discharge into home program and release to full  
sport participation**

- Decision for full return to sport is based on peer-reviewed physical testing and performance in sport-specific drills