

## **ACL Reconstruction Rehab Protocol Dr. Allan Hunt**

- **Weight-bearing:** Weight bearing as tolerated with brace locked in extension
  - **Use crutches for balance and to prevent falling- progress as follows:**
    - Full weight-bearing in immobilizer using crutches
    - Full weight-bearing in immobilizer without crutches
    - Full weight bearing without immobilizer or crutches
- **Phase I (Weeks 0-3)**
- **Range of Motion**
  - **Start POD # 2**
    - Full extension to flexion as tolerated
    - Patellar mobilizations
    - Use ice to reduce swelling and effusion after exercises
- **Therapeutic Exercises**
  - Weeks 0-2: Straight leg raise/Quad sets, Hamstring isometrics  
Perform exercises in the brace if quad control is inadequate
  - Establish normal gait pattern early
  - Weeks 2-8: Begin progressive isometric closed chain exercises, stationary bike for ROM
- **Phase II (Weeks 3-6)**
- **Weight-bearing:** Full weight-bearing with a normal gait pattern, no limping
- **Range of Motion** – Advance to full/painless ROM
- **Therapeutic Exercises**
  - Advance bilateral and unilateral closed chain exercises
  - Emphasis on concentric/eccentric control
  - Stationary bike/Treadmill/Stairmaster/Elliptical
  - Start sport cord lateral drills
  - Ice after exercises
- **Phase III (Weeks 6-10)**
- **Weight-bearing:** Full weight-bearing with a normal gait pattern- no crutches
- **Range of Motion** – Full/painless ROM
- **Therapeutic Exercises**
  - Advance strength training
  - Progress to balance/proprioception exercises
  - Start light plyometric exercises
  - Start jogging and basic running program at 8 weeks

- **Phase IV (Weeks 10+)**
- **Weight-bearing:** Full weight-bearing with a normal gait pattern
- **Range of Motion** – Full/Painless ROM
- **Therapeutic Exercises**
  - Continue closed chain strengthening exercises and proprioception activities
  - Emphasize single leg loading
  - Sport-specific rehabilitation – running/agility training at 9 months
  - Return to impact athletics – 16 months (if pain free)
  - Maintenance program for strength and endurance