



## Patellar Protection Program

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- This 3-phase program can be utilized for both conservative and surgical patellofemoral patients. This systematic approach allows specific goals and criteria to be met. Once goals and criteria are attained, the rehab can progress safely.
- Ultimate goals of program
  - Improve functional status
  - Normalize biomechanical forces
  - Improve strength, power, endurance
  - Decrease pain, inflammation
- Acute Phase – Maximal protection
  - Goals
    - Decrease pain and inflammation
    - Retard muscular atrophy
    - Improve flexibility
    - Restore muscle activation
  - Weight bearing
    - As tolerated, crutches may be needed initially
  - Brace
    - Patella stabilization brace will typically be used
    - Should be worn except when bathing for first 6 weeks
  - NSAIDs, ice, compression
  - Isometric strengthening exercises
  - E-stim
  - Patient education regarding activities, pathomechanics
  - Avoidance program
    - i.e. squatting, kneeling, excessive knee flexion stairs
- Subacute Phase
  - Criteria to progress to subacute phase
    - Full ROM

- Minimal swelling
  - Minimal discomfort
- Gradually introduce quadriceps strengthening
- Knee flexion isotonic
- Variable resistance isotonic weight training
  - Avoiding painful ROM
- Mini-squats
- Continue above exercises
- May begin pool program
- Ice therapy post exercise
- Emphasis on increased functional activity

- Maintenance Phase

- Goals
  - Maintain full ROM
  - Improve limb strength and endurance
  - Restore limb confidence and function
- Criteria to progress to maintenance phase
  - Readiness to return to functional activities
- Continue above exercises
- Progress to functional drills as tolerated
- Continue strengthening without undue stress on patellofemoral joint