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Post-Operative Rehabilitation Prescription Guidelines for  
**MPFL Reconstruction Rehabilitation**

**Patient Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Treatment Frequency:** \_\_\_\_\_ *times per week* **Site**    *R*    *L*

**Duration of Therapy Prescription:** \_\_\_\_\_ *weeks*

***Please send progress notes.***

**Physician's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(I have medically prescribed the above treatments)

**Jozef Murar, M.D.**

**Orthopaedic Surgeon**

**General Information:** The following is a protocol for postoperative patients following "Medial Patellofemoral Ligament Reconstruction." The primary goal of this protocol is to protect the repair while steadily progressing towards and ultimately achieving pre-injury level of activity. Please note this protocol is a guideline. This program is aggressive with range of motion and activation of the quadriceps muscle due to the likelihood of stiffness and quadriceps weakness with this procedure.

**Modalities: PRN**

\*\*This protocol is designed to be administered by a licensed physical therapist and/or certified athletic trainer. Please do not hesitate to contact our office should you have any questions concerning the rehabilitation process.

## **PHASE 1: Immediate Post-operative Phase** (Approximate timeframe: Surgery to 2 weeks)

### **GOALS**

- Pain and effusion control
- No extensor lag

### **Ambulation and brace use:**

- POD 1 – 7: brace locked in extension
- POD 7 – 14: brace locked from 0 – 20 degrees

**Crutch D/C Criteria:** WBAT with crutches (discontinue when gait is normal)

### **Wound Care:**

- POD 1: debulk dressing, TED hose in place
- POD 2: change dressing, keep wound covered, continue TED hose
- POD 7 – 10: sutures out (at appointment) discontinue TED hose when effusion is resolved

### **EXERCISE SUGGESTIONS:**

- AROM and AAROM 0 – 20 degrees
- Patellar Mobilization
- Calf pumping
- Passive extension with heel on bolster or prone hangs
- Electrical stimulation in full extension with quad sets and straight leg raise
- Quad sets, co-contractions for quads and hamstrings
- Straight leg raise x 4 on mat, in brace (parallel bars if poor quad control)
- Double heel raises
- Gentle hamstring stretching
- Ice pack with knee in full extension after exercise

## **PHASE 2: Early Rehabilitation Phase** (Approximate timeframe: 2 – 4 weeks post op)

### **GOALS**

- Normal gait
- AROM 0 – 60 degrees

### **Ambulation and brace use:**

- Weeks 2 – 3: brace locked from 0 – 45 degrees
- Weeks 3 – 4: brace locked from, 0 – 60 degrees

**Crutch D/C Criteria:** WBAT without crutches

### **EXERCISE SUGGESTIONS:**

- Continue appropriate previous exercises
- Scar massage when incisions are healed
- AAROM and AROM 0 – 60 degrees
- Straight leg raise x 4 on mat, without brace (no resistance)
- Single leg heel raises
- Stretches for hamstring, hip flexors, and iliotibial band

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### **PHASE 3:** (Approximate timeframe: 4 – 6 weeks post op)

#### **GOALS**

- ROM: 0 – 90 degrees
- No effusion

#### **Ambulation and brace use:**

- Weeks 4 – 5: brace locked from 0 – 75 degrees
- Weeks 5 – 6: brace locked from, 0 – 90 degrees

#### **EXERCISE SUGGESTIONS:**

- Continue appropriate previous exercises
- AROM and AAROM 0 – 90 degrees
- Standing straight leg raise x 4 with light weight at ankle
- Weight shifts and mini squats
- Short arc quads with light weight as tolerated
- Total gym – mini squats (level 3 – 5) NO FLEXION > 45 degrees
- Passive flexion to 90 degrees (assist with opposite leg)
- Leg press 0 – 45 degrees with light resistance
- Hamstring curls 0 – 45 degrees, carpet drags or rolling stool (closed chain)
- Proprioception ex – double leg BAPS
- Stationary bike for range of motion
- Pool therapy

### **PHASE 4:** (Approximate timeframe: 6 – 9 weeks post op )

#### **GOALS**

- Full AROM

#### **Ambulation and brace use:**

- Weeks 6 – 7: brace locked from 0 – 105 degrees
- Weeks 7 – 8: brace locked from, 0 – 120 degrees

#### **EXERCISE SUGGESTIONS:**

- Continue appropriate previous exercises
- PROM, AAROM, and AROM through full range
- Wall squats NO FLEXION > 45 degrees
- Standing straight leg raise x 4 with Theraband bilaterally
- Forward lateral and retro step downs (NO FLEXION > 45 degrees, small steps)
- Proprioceptive ex, single leg BAPS, ball toss, and body blade
- Hamstring curls through full range of motion, carpet drag or rolling stool (closed chain)
- Stationary bike, progressive resistance and time
- Elliptical trainer
- Treadmill – forwards and backwards walking

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**PHASE 5:** (Approximate timeframe: 9 – 12 weeks post op)

**GOALS**

- Walk 2 miles at 15 min/mile pace

**Ambulation and brace use:**

- Discontinue use of the brace

**EXERCISE SUGGESTIONS:**

- Continue appropriate previous exercises
- Progressive resistance
- PROM, AAROM, and AROM to regain full motion
- Hamstring curl weight machine
- Knee extension weight machine
- Hip weight machine x 4 bilaterally
- Forward, lateral and retro step downs (medium to large step)
- Treadmill – walking progression program

**PHASE 6:** (Approximate timeframe: 12 + weeks post op)

**EXERCISE SUGGESTIONS:**

- May begin treadmill jogging intervals
- Progress to light agility and functional training exercises as tolerated

**Return-to-Sport Criteria:**

1. Full knee range of motion
2. No pain
3. Good quad contraction
4. Strength at 90% of the opposite side
5. Hop test 90% of opposite side