

Meniscus Root Repair Post-Operative Protocol

Christie Heikes, MD

PHASE I – MAXIMUM PROTECTION (WEEKS 0 TO 6):

Weeks 0-1:

- Patient will be given a **hinged knee brace** and will be placed in this post-operatively
 - Brace to be worn, locked in extension, while ambulating for **6 weeks**
 - Patient will remain toe touch weight bearing for 6 weeks
 - **Toe touch weight bearing:** no weight transmitted through the operative leg, however can rest the toes down for balance
 - Using crutches for 6 weeks while toe touch weight bearing
 - Patient should sleep with brace on until first post-operative appointment
- Range of motion:
 - 0° of knee extension
 - **Limit to 90° of knee flexion until 4 weeks post-op**
 - During first 4 weeks okay to unlock knee brace while sitting or at physical therapy, but should not flex knee >90° until 4 weeks post-op
- Goals:
 - Reduce inflammation
 - Normalize patella mobility with manual mobilizations
 - Gain full extension
 - 90° of knee flexion limitation x4 weeks
- Exercise Progression:
 - Emphasize patellar mobilizations
 - Passive/active knee range of motion with 90° flexion limit
 - Quadriceps setting emphasize VMO function
 - Multi-plane straight leg raising
 - Open and closed chain (when WB with brace on) multiplane hip strengthening
 - Gait training
 - Deep water pool program

PHASE II – PROGRESSIVE STRETCHING AND EARLY STRENGTHENING (WEEKS 6 TO 8):

- Exercise Progression:
 - Open brace 0° to 90° for 2 weeks while ambulating
 - Full knee extension/hyperextension
 - Gradual progression to full knee flexion
 - Continue to emphasize patella mobility

- Begin bilateral closed kinetic chain strengthening limited range initially
- Step-up progression
- Begin stationary bike with light resistance initially
- Gait training- normalize gait pattern

PHASE III – ADVANCED STRENGTHENING AND PROPRIOCEPTIVE PHASE (WEEKS 8 TO 12):

Exercise Progression:

- Full knee range of motion
- Begin full gym strengthening program
- Advance stationary biking program (increase intensity), introduce treadmill walking and elliptical trainer
- Begin shallow water pool program
- Advance unilateral closed kinetic chain program
- Gym strengthening progression (leg press, hamstrings curls etc.)

PHASE IV – ADVANCE STRENGTHENING AND PLYOMETRIC DRILLS (WEEKS 12 TO 16):

Exercise Progression:

- Linear running progression
- Progress to lateral and rotational stresses at 14 weeks
- Begin multi-directional drills on the field at 14-16 weeks
- Plyometric drills from bilateral to unilateral
- Follow-up examination with the physician
- Sports test for return to play