

## Meniscus Repair Rehabilitation (Peripheral Tears)

### PHASE I: MAXIMUM PROTECTION PHASE (Weeks 1-4)

**Goals:** Control inflammation/effusion  
Allow early healing  
Full passive knee extension  
Gradually increase knee flexion  
Independent quadriceps control

#### Stage 1: Immediate post-surgery days 1 through 10

- Ice, compression, elevation
- Brace locked at 0 degrees for ambulation and sleeping only
  - Brace may be unlocked while sitting, etc.
- ROM (passive 0-90)
- Patellar mobilizations
- Stretch hamstrings and calf
- Strengthening exercises:
  - Quad sets
  - SLR flexion
  - Hip Abd/Adduction
  - Knee extension 60-0 degrees
- Weight bearing: 25-50% WB as tolerated with 2 crutches
- Avoid active knee flexion

#### Stage 2: Weeks 2 through 4

- Continue use of ice and compression
- Brace locked for ambulation
- ROM guidelines
  - Gradually increase PROM
  - Week 2: 0-100/105 degrees
  - Week 3: 0-115/120 degrees
  - Week 4: 0-125/135 degrees
- Weight bearing guidelines → continue to lock brace
  - Week 2: 50% WB
  - Week 3: FWB as tolerated

\*Discontinue crutches when safe and proper gait (usually 3-4 weeks)

- Continue PROM exercises and stretching
- Strengthening exercises
  - Multi-angle quad isometrics
  - SLR (all 4 planes)
  - Knee extension 90-0 degrees

- CKC mini-squats 0-45 degrees
- CKC wall squats
- CKC weight shifts (diagonal)
- Balance training (cup walking)
- Bicycle (once ROM appropriate)

\*Avoid twisting, deep squatting and stooping

\*Avoid hamstring curls

### **PHASE III: MODERATE PROTECTION PHASE (Weeks 5-8)**

**Goals:** Full PROM

No swelling/inflammation

Re-establish muscle control

Proper gait pattern

- Continue use of ice and compression as needed
- Continue ROM and stretching to maintain 0-135 degrees
- Progress strengthening exercises
  - Leg press 70-0 degrees
  - Knee extension 90-40 degrees
  - Hip Abd/Adduction
  - Wall squats 0-70 degrees
  - Vertical squats 0-60 degrees
  - Lateral step-ups
- Balance/proprioception training
  - Biodex stability
  - Squats rocker board
  - Cup walking
- Bicycle (if ROM permits)
- Pool program
- Discontinue brace at weeks 4-5

\*Avoid twisting, pivoting, running and deep squatting

### **PHASE III: CONTROLLED ACTIVITY PHASE (Weeks 9-16)**

**Goals:** Improve strength and endurance

Maintain full ROM

Gradually increase applied stress

#### Week 9

- Continue all strengthening exercises listed above
- Initiate light resisted hamstring curls
- Initiate stair stepper
- Toe calf raises
- Progress balance training
- Progress to isotonic strengthening program

#### Week 12

- Continue strengthening and stretching program
- Initiate pool running

## **PHASE IV: RETURN TO ACTIVITY PHASE (Months 4-6)**

**Goals:** Improve strength and endurance  
Prepare for unrestricted activities

### Criteria to progress to Phase IV

- Full non-painful ROM
- No pain or tenderness
- Satisfactory clinical exam
- Satisfactory isokinetic test

### Exercises

- Continue and progress all strengthening exercises and stretching drills
- Deep squatting permitted at 4 months
- Initiate straight line running: 4 months
- Initiate pivoting and cutting: 5 months
- Initiate agility training: 5 months
- Gradually return to sports: 6 months