
PHYSICAL THERAPY REHAB PROTOCOL

Knee MCL Reconstruction

Rehab Protocol

No hip adductor strengthening (including side-lying hip adductor strengthening) during the early phases below.

Weeks 1–2

- Post-op brace in full extension
- Ankle pumps
- Quad sets and SLR (with brace on)
- Toe-touch (flat foot) weightbearing
- Passive range of motion 0–40°
- **No hip adductor strengthening**

Weeks 3–4

- Range of motion brace set 0–75°
- Continue toe-touch weightbearing, with brace locked in extension
- Keep brace locked in extension for sleeping
- Continue with home exercises as previous
- Begin formal physical therapy

Week 5

- Advance range of motion as tolerated, brace open
- Continue to keep brace locked in extension when weightbearing
- Stationary bike for range of motion (high seat, low resistance)
- Progress straight leg raise program
- Begin hamstring and hip PREs
- **No side-lying hip adductor strengthening**

Week 6

- Continue to keep brace locked while toe-touch weightbearing
- Continue exercises as previous
- Seated AAROM flexion and extension

- Begin leg press, 0–70° arc of motion
- **No side-lying hip adductor strengthening**

Week 7

- Begin to progress weightbearing as tolerated, with brace locked in extension; discontinue crutches when strength is adequate
- Continue to progress range of motion as tolerated
- Continue with exercises as previous
- Heel raises with brace on
- Hip strengthening
- **No side-lying hip adductor strengthening**

Week 8

- Continue exercises as above
- Unlock brace for ambulation when quad control is adequate
- Mini squats 0–60°
- 4" step-ups
- Leg press 0–90°
- Lateral side stepping without resistance
- Hip strengthening

Week 9

- Discontinue brace when quad control is adequate
- ROM goal 0–115°
- Progress LE PREs
- Ball squats
- Mini squats and weight shifts
- 8" step-ups
- 4" step-downs
- Retro treadmill

Week 10

- Continue to progress strengthening and balance exercises
- Advance step-downs to 6–8"
- Slide board
- OK for swimming, light flutter kick only

Weeks 11–22

- Initiate StairMaster
- Goal of full motion and strength > 80% of contralateral side
- When goals are reached, can progress to walk-jog program

Months 4–5

- Agility program
- Sport-specific drills

Criteria for return to sport: full active ROM, quad strength and functional hop test > 90% of contralateral side, satisfactory clinical exam.

These instructions are general guidelines from Dr. Tannenbaum's office. Always follow any specific instructions given to you by Dr. Tannenbaum or his team. Questions? Call Southern Indiana Orthopedics at (812) 376-9353.