



Post-Operative Rehabilitation for Posterior Cruciate Ligament Reconstruction

Phase I: 0-4 Weeks

- ***Emphasis on ROM and pain/swelling control***
- Typically minimal activities for first 7 days post-op to minimize swelling.
- Ice nearly continuously for first 2 weeks, and frequently thereafter
- Weight bearing as tolerated, however up only for bathroom/eating for first several days post-op
- Crutches are used until quad control and gait normalize (no extensor lag). No brace is typically used.
- ROM:
 - As tolerated
 - Emphasis is on regaining full terminal extension including hyperextension symmetric to contralateral leg
- Exercises:
 - Heel props, Heel slides (5 times/day for 10 min, each)
 - SLR supine, quad sets, prone hangs
 - Ankle Pumps, calf stretching, patellar mobilization
 - Side Lying Core Exercises
 - **AVOID Hamstring exercises until 6 weeks post-operatively**

Phase II 4-12 Weeks

- ***Maintain ROM and progress strengthening***
- ROM
 - Goal: Full symmetric extension
 - Full ROM
- Exercises:
 - Begin toe raises, closed chain quads, balance exercises, hamstring curls, step-ups, front and side
 - Advance hip/core/glute strength
 - Begin Stationary bike

Phase III 12-16 Weeks

- ROM: Full
- Exercises:
 - Advance closed chain strengthening
 - Progress proprioception activities
 - 12 Weeks: Begin stairmaster, elliptical and running straight ahead

Phase IV 16-24 weeks:

- Continue Strengthening & Flexibility program
- 16 Weeks: Begin forward running (treadmill) program when 8” step down satisfactory
- 20 Weeks: Advance to sprinting, backward running, cutting/pivoting/changing direction, initiate plyometric program and sport-specific drills.

Phase V 6+months

- Strength maintenance
- Gradual return to sport/activity, when CLEARED BY MD