

## ACL and Posterolateral Corner Postop Protocol

### *Core Rehabilitation Guidelines*

- Full extension: brace for 2 weeks at all times
- After 2 weeks, you need to start slowly bending your knee to work on motion
- Continue wearing the brace for 6 weeks
- Remove the bandages wrapped around your leg on the third postoperative day
  - Keep the sticky dressing over your incision on until follow-up
- No weight bearing for 4 weeks whatsoever

### *Specific Timeline: 0-4 Weeks*

- **Emphasize**
  - Patella mobility
  - Full knee extension with brace compliance
  - Improving quadriceps contraction
  - Controlling pain/effusion
- GOALS:
  - ROM:
    - Full passive extension by 2 weeks
    - Active flexion to 90 after 2 weeks
  - Normalize patella mobility
  - Weightbearing:
    - Non-weight bearing
  - Control post-operative pain / swelling
  - Prevent quadriceps inhibition
  - Promote independence in home therapeutic exercise program
- BRACE INSTRUCTIONS:
  - Ambulate with brace locked in extension
- PRECAUTIONS:
  - Avoid heat application
  - Avoid prolonged standing/walking
- TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:
  - Towel under heel for knee extension, patella mobilization, quadriceps re-education (NMES and /or EMG), hip progressive resisted exercises, proprioception training, SLR all planes (with brace), cryotherapy for pain and edema
  - Emphasize patient compliance to HEP and weight bearing precautions/progression
- MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR ADVANCEMENT TO NEXT PHASE:
  - Able to SLR without quadriceps lag
  - 0° knee extension, 90 flexion by week 4

### *Specific Timeline: 4-12 Weeks*

- GOALS:
  - ROM 0° - 125°, progressing to full ROM
  - Good patella mobility
  - Minimal swelling
  - Restore normal gait (non-analgesic) without assistive device
  - Ascend 8" stairs with good control, without pain
- BRACE INSTRUCTIONS:
  - Continue wearing brace until 6 weeks
  - DC brace after 6 weeks post-op
- TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:
  - Progress R.O.M.
  - Quadriceps re-education (electrical stim, biofeedback).
  - Hamstring and hip progressive resistance exercises.
  - Straight leg raises.
  - Patellar mobilization.
  - Game Ready Icing Modality.
  - Gait Training
  - Discontinue crutches when gait is normal.
  - Continue home exercises
  - No lunges, elliptical, or stair master!
- PHYSICAL THERAPY FREQUENCY
  - Two to three times a week for 8 weeks
- MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR ADVANCEMENT:
  - ROM 0-125°
  - Normal gait pattern
  - Demonstrate ability to ascend 8" step
  - Good patella mobility
  - Functional progression pending functional assessment

*Specific Timeline: 6-14 Weeks*

- GOALS:
  - Restore Full ROM
  - Able to descend 8" stairs with good leg control & no pain
  - Improve ADL endurance
  - Improve lower extremity flexibility
  - Protect patellofemoral joint
- TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:
  - Progress squat/leg press program, initiate step down program, advance proprioceptive training, agility exercises, retrograde treadmill ambulation/running, quadriceps stretching
  - Emphasize patient compliance to both home and gym exercise program
- PRECAUTIONS:
  - Avoid pain with therapeutic exercise & functional activities
  - Avoid running and sport activity till adequate strength development and MD clearance

- PHYSICAL THERAPY FREQUENCY
  - Two to three times a week for 8 weeks
- MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR ADVANCEMENT:
  - ROM to WNL
  - Ability to descend 8” stairs with good leg control without pain
  - Functional progression pending functional assessment
  - Emphasize
    - Improving quadriceps strength
    - Eccentric quadriceps control
    - Normalizing knee ROM and patella mobility
    - Minimizing knee effusion
    - Normal gait pattern

*Specific Timeline: 13-24 Weeks*

- TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:
  - Quadriceps isotonic- full arc for closed chain strengthening
    - No open chain or active knee extension
  - Begin functional exercise program
  - Begin running program at 18 weeks – only if step down from 9 inch height is symmetrical
  - No lunges or stair master
  - Elliptical is ok
- PRECAUTIONS:
  - Avoid pain with therapeutic exercise & functional activities
  - Avoid sport activity till adequate strength development and clearance from Dr Ramkumar
- PHYSICAL THERAPY FREQUENCY
  - Two to three times a week for 8 weeks

*Specific Timeline: 25-36 Weeks*

- TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:
  - Quadriceps isotonic- full arc for closed chain strengthening and progressive resistance
  - Advance functional exercise program
  - Progress running program
- PRECAUTIONS:
  - Avoid pain with therapeutic exercise & functional activities
- CRITERIA FOR DISCHARGE:
  - Quadricep LSI > 90% limb symmetry
  - Lack of apprehension with movements for activities of daily living
  - Flexibility to accepted levels of sport performance
  - Independence with gym program for maintenance and progression of therapeutic exercise program at discharge
- PHYSICAL THERAPY FREQUENCY
  - Two to three times a week for 8 weeks