

## **Meniscus Repair Rehabilitation (Peripheral Tears)**

### Phase I – Maximal Protection Phase (1-4 weeks)

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

#### Stage 1: Immediate post-op day 1 through day 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
  - Hib Abd/Adduction
  - Knee extension 60-0 degrees
- Weight bearing: toe touch with two crutches

#### Stage 2: Week 2 through week 4

Continue use of ice and compression

- Brace locked for ambulation
- ROM guidelines
  - Gradually increase PROM
  - Week 2: 0-90/100 degrees
  - Week 3: 0-105/115 degrees
  - Week 4: 0-120/135 degrees
- Weightbearing guidelines
  - Week 2: 25% WB
  - Week 3: 50% WB
  - Week 4: 75% to full WB

\*Discontinue crutches when safe and proper gait (usually 4-5 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
  - CKS weight shifts (diagonal)
- Balance training (cup walking)
- Bicycle (once ROM appropriate)

\*Avoid twisting, deep squatting, and stooping

### Phase II – 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 week 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 (Month 4-6)

Goals: Improve strength and endurance  
Prepare for unrestricted activities

Criteria to progress to Phase IV:

1. Full non-painful ROM
2. No pain or tenderness
3. Satisfactory clinical exam
4. Satisfactory isokinetic test

Exercises:

- Continue and progress al 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