

MENISCAL REPAIR REHABILITATION PROTOCOL**PHASE I: MAXIMUM PROTECTION – WEEKS 1-6:****GOALS:**

- Diminish inflammation and swelling
- Restore ROM
- Reestablish quadriceps muscle activity

Stage 1: Immediate Postoperative Day 1-Week 3

- Ice, compression, elevation
- Electrical muscle stimulation
- Weight bearing as tolerated with brace locked at 0 degrees
- **Meniscus root repairs** = non-weight bearing with brace locked at 0 degrees
- Okay to unlock brace while non-weight bearing (i.e. seated, lying down)
- No brace required during sleep
- ROM 0-90
 - Motion is limited for the first 7-21 days, depending on the development of scar tissue around the repair site. Gradual increase in flexion ROM is based on assessment of pain and site of repair (0-90 degrees).
- Patellar mobilization
- Scar tissue mobilization
- Passive ROM
- Exercises
 - Quadriceps isometrics
 - Hamstring isometrics (if posterior horn repair, no hamstring exercises for 6 weeks)
 - Hip abduction and adduction
- Proprioception training with brace locked at 0 degrees

Stage 2: Weeks 4-6

- Gradually increase to full weight bearing with brace unlocked
- Progressive resistance exercises (PRE's) 1-5 pounds
- Limited range knee extension (in range less likely to impinge or pull on repair)
- Toe raises
- Cycling (no resistance)
- PNF with resistance
- Unloaded flexibility

PHASE II: MODERATE PROTECTION – WEEKS 6-10

Criteria for progression to Phase II:

- ROM 0-90 degrees
- No change in pain or effusion
- Quadriceps control (MMT 4/5)

GOALS:

- Increased strength, power, endurance
- Normalize ROM of knee
- Prepare patients for advanced exercises

Exercises:

- Strength - PRE progression
- Flexibility exercises
- Lateral step-ups
- Mini-squats at 8-10 weeks (less than 90 degrees)

Endurance Program:

- Swimming (no frog kick), pool running – if available
- Cycling
- Stair machine

Coordination Program:

- Balance board
- Pool sprinting – if pool available
- Backward walking
- Plyometrics

PHASE III: ADVANCED PHASE – WEEKS 11-15

Criteria for progression to phase III:

- Full, pain free ROM
- No pain or tenderness
- Satisfactory clinical examination
- SLR without lag
- Gait without device, brace unlocked

GOALS:

- Increase power and endurance
- Emphasize return to skill activities
- Prepare for return to full unrestricted activities

Exercises:

- Continue all exercises
- Increase plyometrics, pool program
- Initiate running program
- No deep squats until 4-6 months

Return to activity: Criteria

- Full, pain free ROM

- Satisfactory clinical examination

Criteria for discharge from skilled therapy:

- Non-antalgic gait
- Pain free/full ROM
- Quad strength at 80-90% of contralateral side
- Independent with home program
- Normal age appropriate balance and proprioception
- Resolved palpable edema