LATERAL/POSTERIOR LATERAL CORNER KNEE RECONSTRUCTION
REHABILITATION PROTOCOL

The following is a protocol for postoperative patients following PLC knee reconstruction. The primary goal of this protocol is to protect the reconstruction while steadily progressing towards and ultimately achieving pre-injury level of activity. Please note this protocol is a guideline. Patients with additional surgery (i.e. collateral ligament repair, meniscal repair) will progress at different rates. Achieving the criteria of each phase should be emphasized more than the approximate duration. If a patient should develop an increase in pain or swelling or decrease in motion at any time, activity should be decreased until problems are resolved.

**PHASE I: 0-2 WEEKS POSTOPERATIVE**

**GOALS:**
- Pain / effusion control
- Good quad control

**AMBULATION, DRESSING, AND BRACE USE**

*Dressing* – POD 1: Debulk dressing, TED Hose in place
- POD 2: Change dressing, keep wound covered, continue TED Hose
- POD 7-10: Sutures out, D/C TED Hose when effusion resolved

**Brace** – Locked in extension

**Crutches** – Flat foot weight bearing (FFWB)

**EXERCISES:**
- Patellar mobilization (teach patient)
- AAROM, AROM 0-90 degrees
- Calf pumping
- Passive extension with heel on bolster or Prone hangs

Electrical stimulation in full extension with quad sets and SLR

Quad sets, Co-contractions quads / Hamstrings

Straight leg raise (SLR) x 3 on mat, in brace (parallel bars if poor quad control)
- NO ABD

Ice pack with knee in full extension after exercise

**PHASE II: ~2-4 WEEKS POSTOPERATIVE**

**GOALS:**
- ROM 0-90
- No extensor lag

**AMBULATION AND BRACE USE**

**Brace** – locked in extension

**Crutches** – Partial weight bearing (PWB)

**EXERCISES:**
- Continue appropriate previous exercises
- Scar massage when incision healed
- AAROM, AROM 0-90 degrees
- Begin Total Gym for ROM – Level 1-3
- Passive flexion to 90 degrees (push up with opposite leg)
- Straight leg raise (SLR) x 3 on mat, no brace (no resistance) – NO ABD
- Double leg heel raises
- Stretches – Hamstring, hip flexors

**PHASE III: ~4-6 WEEKS POSTOPERATIVE**

**GOALS:**
- ROM 0-110 degrees
- No effusion

**AMBULATION AND BRACE USE:**

**Brace** – Open to available range

**Crutches** – Weight bearing as tolerated (WBAT) (D/C when gait is normal)

**EXERCISES:**
- Continue appropriate previous exercises
- AAROM, AROM 0-110 degrees
Standing SLR x 4 with Theraband bilaterally (no brace)
– May begin Hip ABD with Theraband if good LE control in full extension
Mini squats in parallel bars – No knee flexion > 45 degrees
Leg press with light resistance 0-45 degrees
Hamstring curls 0-45 degrees – Carpet drags or rolling stool (closed chain)
Proprioceptive ex – Single leg standing, double leg BAPS for weight shift
Single leg heel raise
Stationary bike for ROM – No resistance
Pool therapy – Exercises in sagittal plane only

**PHASE V: ~6-8 WEEKS POSTOPERATIVE**
**GOAL:** Full ROM

**AMBULATION AND BRACE USE:**
Brace – Open to full range

**EXERCISES:**
Continue appropriate previous exercises
PROM, AAROM, AROM to regain full motion
Wall squats – No knee flexion past 45 degrees
Forward, lateral and retro step downs
– No knee flexion > 45 degrees (small step)
Knee extension ex 90-30 degrees
Hamstring curls 0-90 – Carpet drags or rolling stool (closed chain)
Leg press 0-90 degrees with resistance as tolerated
Hip weight machine x 4 bilaterally
Proprioceptive ex – Progress to single leg BAPS, ball toss and body blade
Stationary bike – Progressive resistance and endurance
Elliptical trainer
Treadmill – Forwards and backwards walking
Pool therapy – Chest deep

**PHASE VI: ~8-12 WEEKS POSTOPERATIVE**
**GOAL:** Walk 2 miles at 15 min/mile pace

**AMBULATION AND BRACE USE:**
D/C brace

**EXERCISES:**
Continue appropriate previous exercises with progressive resistance
Forward, lateral and retro step downs – Medium to large step
Hamstring curl weight machine through full range
Knee extension weight machine through full range
Stairmaster – Small steps
Treadmill – Walking progression program
Pool therapy – Unrestricted
ITB stretch

**PHASE VII: ~3-4 MONTHS POSTOPERATIVE**
**GOAL:** Run 2 miles at easy pace

**EXERCISES:**
Continue appropriate previous exercises
Fitter Slide board
Agility drills – Figure 8s, gentle loops, large zigzags
Swimming
Treadmill – Running progression program
Quad stretches

**PHASE VIII: ~4-6 MONTHS POSTOPERATIVE**
**GOAL:** Return to all activities

**EXERCISES:**
Continue appropriate previous exercises
Agility drills / Plyometrics
Sit-up progression
Progressive weight training program
Running progression to track
Transition to home / gym program

*No contact sports until 6 months post-op*