



Adam J. Farber, MD

Sports Medicine and Orthopaedic Surgery
Board Certified; Fellowship-trained in Sports Medicine & Arthroscopic Surgery
P: 480-219-3342; F: 480-219-3271

Post-Operative Physical Therapy Protocol for Meniscus Repair

Phase I: MAXIMUM PROTECTION PHASE (1 -4 weeks)

Goals:

1. Control inflammation/effusion
2. Allow early healing
3. Full passive knee extension
4. Gradually increase knee flexion
5. Independent quadriceps control

Stage I: Immediate post-surgery Day 1 through Day 10:

Ice, compression, elevation
Brace locked at 0° for ambulation and sleeping only
ROM (passive 0-45°)
Patellar mobilizations
Stretch hamstrings and calf
Strengthening exercises:
Quad sets
SLR flexion
Hip Abd/Adduction
Knee extension
Weight bearing: Non-weightbearing with crutches

Stage II: Week 2 through Week 4:

Continue use of ice and compression
Brace locked for ambulation

ROM Guidelines

Gradually increase PROM

Week 2: 0-45°

Week 3: 0-65°

Week 4: 0-90°

Week 5: 0-100°

Week 6: 0-110°

Week 7: 0-120°

Week 8: 0-135°

Weightbearing Guidelines

Week 2: Non-weightbearing

Week 3: Non-weightbearing

Week 4: Non-weightbearing

Week 5: 25% FWB

Week 6: 50% FWB

Week 7: 75% FWB

Week 8: 100% FWB

Discontinue crutches and brace Week 8

Strengthening exercises

Multi-angle quad isometrics

SLR (all 4 planes)

Knee extension 90-0

*Avoid twisting, deep squatting, and stooping

Phase II: MODERATE PROTECTION PHASE (Weeks 5 -8)

Goals:

1. Full PROM
2. No swelling/inflammation
3. Re-establish muscle control
4. Proper gait pattern
5. Continue use of ice and compression as needed
6. Continue ROM and stretching to maintain 0-135°
7. Progress strengthening exercises
8. Leg press 70°-0°
9. Knee extension 90°-40°
10. Hip Abd/Adduction

11. Lateral step-ups
12. Balance/Proprioception training

* Avoid twisting, pivoting, running, and deep squatting

Phase III: CONTROLLED ACTIVITY PHASE (Weeks 9-16)

Goals:

1. Improve strength and endurance
2. Maintain full ROM
3. 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

Criteria to progress to Phase IV:

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

Phase IV: RETURN TO ACTIVITY PHASE (Month 4-6)

Goals:

1. Improve strength and endurance
2. Prepare for unrestricted activities

Exercises:

Continue and progress all strengthening exercises & stretching drills
Deep squatting permitted at 4 months
Initiate straight line running at 4 months
Initiate pivoting and cutting at 5 months
Initiate agility training at 5 months

Gradually return to sports at 6 months