



Meniscus Repair Rehabilitation: Complex Tears

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PHASE I: MAXIMUM PROTECTION PHASE (1-6 Weeks)

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

Stage 1: Immediate post-surgery days 1 through 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
 ○ Hip Abd/Adduction
 ○ Knee extension 60-0 degrees
Weight bearing: toe touch with two crutches
Avoid active knee flexion

Stage 2: Weeks 2 through 4

Continue use of ice and compression
Brace locked for ambulation and sleeping
ROM guidelines
 ○ Gradually increase PROM as tolerated
 ○ Week 2: 0-100 degrees
 ○ Week 3: 0-110 degrees
 ○ Week 4: 0-120 degrees
Weight bearing guidelines – Continue to lock brace
 ○ Toe touch with two crutches for full 6 weeks unless specified differently by provider
Continue PROM exercises and stretching

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Strengthening exercise

- Multi-angle quad isometrics
- SLR (all 4 planes)
- Knee extension 90-0 degrees
- CKC weight shifts

Avoid twisting, deep squatting, and stooping

Avoid hamstring strengthening

Stage 3: Weeks 5 through 6

Full weight bearing at 6 weeks

Initiate CKC exercises such as:

- ½ squat 0°-45°
- Leg press 0°-60°
- Wall squat 0°-60°

Initiate proprioception training

- Tilt board squats
- Biodex stability

Continue CKC exercise

Initiate hip ABD/Adduction and hip flexion/extension on multi-hip machine\

PHASE II: MODERATE PROTECTION PHASE (7-12 Weeks)

Goals: Establish full PROM

Diminish swelling/inflammation

Re-establish muscle control

Promote proper gait pattern

Weeks 7 through 10

Continue use of ice and compression as needed

Continue ROM and stretching

- Week 7: PROM 0°-125°/130°

Continue use of brace for 8 weeks

Progress strengthening exercises:

- Leg press 70°-0°
- Knee extension 90°-40°
- Hip ABD/Adduction
- Wall squats 0°-70°
- Vertical squats 0°-60°
- Lateral step-ups

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- Front step down
- Balance/proprioception training
- Biodex stability
 - Squats rocker board
 - Cup walking
- Bicycle (if ROM permits)
- Pool Program
- Avoid twisting, pivoting, running and deep squatting

Weeks 10 through 12

- Continue all exercises listed above
- Initiate “light” hamstring curls
- Initiate toe calf raises

PHASE III: RETURN TO ACTIVITY PHASE (Months 6-8)

- Goals: Improve strength and endurance
- Prepare for unrestricted activities
- Progress to agility and cutting drills

Criteria to Progress to Phase IV

- Full non-painful ROM
- No pain or tenderness
- Satisfactory clinical exam
- Satisfactory isokinetic test

Exercises

- Continue and progress all strengthening exercises and stretching drills
- Progress isotonic program
 - Wall squats
 - Leg press
 - Lateral step-ups
 - Knee extensions 90°-40°
 - Hamstring curls
 - Hip AB/Adduction
 - Bicycle, stair stepper, elliptical machine
- Deep squatting permitted at 5 ½ months
- Initiate straight line running: 6 months



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Initiate pivoting and cutting: 7 months

Initiate agility training: 7 months

Gradually return to sports: 7-8 months