

## **Meniscus Repair- Peripheral/Vertical**

### **Post-Operative Protocol**

#### **Phase I – Maximum Protection**

##### **Weeks 0 to 3:**

- Brace - locked in full extension during ambulation and sleep for 3 weeks
  - Can unlock brace to allow 0-90 degrees for unloaded range of motion only
- Use two crutches with touch-down weight bearing (<25% body weight) at all times for 3 weeks
- Limit knee flexion to 90-degrees for 3 weeks

##### **Goals**

- Reduce inflammation and pain
- 0 degrees of knee extension

##### **Exercise progression**

- Emphasize patellofemoral mobilizations
- Passive/active knee range of motion with 90° flexion limit
- Quadriceps setting emphasize VMO function
- Multi-plane straight leg raising
- Open chain hip strengthening
- Gait training

##### **Weeks 3-6:**

- Brace – open to 0-90 degrees for ambulation, can discontinue with sleep
- Continue using two crutches, with gradual progression of weight bearing
  - Increase WB to FWB over next 2 weeks
- Progress as tolerated past 90 degrees of knee flexion

##### **Goals**

- Reduce inflammation and pain
- Maintain 0° of knee extension

#### **Phase II – Progressive Stretching and Early Strengthening**

##### **Weeks 6 to 8:**

- Discontinue brace

##### **Goals**

- Full knee extension/hyperextension
- Gradual progression to full knee flexion
- No swelling
- Normal gait

##### **Exercise progression**

- Continue to emphasize patella mobility
- Begin bilateral closed kinetic chain strengthening (limited range initially)
- Step-up progression
- Begin stationary bike with light resistance initially
- Proprioception drills

### **Phase III – Advanced Strengthening and Proprioception**

#### **Weeks 8 to 12:**

##### Goals

- Full knee range of motion

##### Exercise progression

- Avoid rotational movements until 14 weeks
- Begin gym strengthening program
- Advance stationary biking program (increase intensity)
- Introduce treadmill walking and elliptical trainer
- Begin unilateral closed kinetic chain program
- Gym strengthening progression (leg press above 90-degrees, hamstrings curls etc.)

### **Phase IV – Advanced Strengthening and Plyometric Drills**

#### **Weeks 12 to 16:**

- Follow-up examination with the physician

##### Goals

- Pass return-to-sport functional test at > 90% (involved vs uninvolved limb) testing at 16 weeks

##### Exercise progression

- Plyometric drills from bilateral to unilateral at 12 weeks
- Linear running progression at 12 weeks
- Progress to lateral and rotational stresses at 14 weeks
- Multi-directional drills at 14 to 16 weeks