

Meniscus Repair Rehabilitation: Complex Tears



Dr. Campbell

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

OVERALL CARE

- Ice, compression, elevation

BRACE

- Brace locked at 0 degrees for ambulation and sleeping only
- Brace may be unlocked while sitting, etc.

RANGE OF MOTION

- ROM passive 0-90
- Able to restore extension & hyperextension
- Patellar mobilizations
- Stretch hamstrings and calf

WEIGHT BEARING

- Non-weight bearing with two crutches

EXERCISES

- Avoid active knee flexion beyond 90 degrees of flexion
- Quad sets
- SLR flexion

- Hip abduction/adduction
- Knee extension 60-0 degrees

STAGE 2: WEEKS 2-4

OVERALL CARE

- Continue use of ice and compression

BRACE

- Brace locked for ambulation and sleeping

RANGE OF MOTION

- Keep PROM at 0-90° for first 4 weeks

WEIGHT BEARING

- Continue to lock brace at all times
- Non-weight bearing through week 4

EXERCISES

- Continue PROM exercises and stretching
- Strengthening exercises
- Multi-angle quad isometrics
- SLR (all 4 planes)
- Knee extension 90-0 degrees
- CKC weight shifts

PRECAUTIONS

- Avoid twisting, deep squatting, and stooping for about 16 weeks
- Avoid hamstring strengthening for about 8 weeks

STAGE 3: WEEKS 5-6

OVERALL CARE

- Continue use of ice and compression as needed

*If you have any problems or questions,
please call your doctor's office (8am-5pm).
Answering service for after hours.*

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BRACE

- Unlock brace for ambulation and sleeping

RANGE OF MOTION

- Progress PROM 10 degrees/week

WEIGHT BEARING

- Progress to 50% full weight bearing over weeks 5 and 6

EXERCISES

- Initiate CKC exercise such as:
 - 1/2 squat 0-45 degrees
 - Leg press 0-45 degrees
 - Wall squat 0-45 degrees
- Initiate proprioception training
- Tilt board squats
- Biodex stability
- Continue CKC exercise
- Initiate hip abduction/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 7-10

OVERALL CARE

- Continue use of ice and compression as needed

BRACE

- Continue use of brace for 12 weeks

RANGE OF MOTION

- Week 7: PROM 0-125/130 degrees

WEIGHT BEARING

- Progress to full weight bearing at 8 weeks

EXERCISES

- Leg press 60-0 degrees
- Knee extension 90-40 degrees
- Hip abduction/adduction

- Wall squats 0-60 degrees
- Vertical squats 0-60 degrees
- Lateral step-ups
- Front step downs
- Balance/proprioception training
- Biodex stability
- Squats rocker board
- Cup walking
- Bicycle (if ROM permits)
- Pool program
- Avoid twisting, pivoting, running and deep squatting

WEEKS 10-12

EXERCISES

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

Phase III: Controlled Activity Phase (13-18 Weeks)

GOALS

- Improve strength and endurance
- Maintain full ROM
- Gradually increase applied stress

WEEKS 13-15

EXERCISES

- Continue all strengthening exercises listed above
- Initiate stair stepper
- Toe calf raises
- Progress balance training
- Progress to isotonic strengthening program
- Initiate front lunges
- Initiate pool running (forward and backward)
- Initiate walking program

WEEKS 16-18

EXERCISES

- Continue strengthening and stretching program
- Progress walking program
- Initiate running in pool

Phase IV: 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 degrees
- Hamstring curls
- Hip abduction/adduction
- Bicycle, stair stepper, elliptical machine
- Deep squatting permitted at 5 1/2 months
- Initiate straight line running: 6 months
- Initiate pivoting and cutting: 7 months (bracing may be recommended for this)
- Initiate agility training: 7 months (bracing TBD)
- Gradually return to sports: 8 months (bracing TBD)