

Postoperative Rehabilitation Protocol for Posterior Cruciate Ligament (PCL) Reconstruction

**Physical Therapy should be started within a week after surgery*

Postoperative weeks 0-2

- Precautions / Restrictions
 - Non-weight bearing
 - Hinged knee brace locked in extension when not working on ROM.
- Range of Motion
 - **Prone only**
 - Passive flexion: 0-90 degrees
 - Active assisted extension 70-0 degrees
 - Patella mobilization
 - Towel Extensions, prone hangs
- Strengthening
 - SLR supine with brace locked at 0 degrees
 - Quadriceps isometrics at 60 degrees
- Modalities PRN

Postoperative weeks 2-6

- Precautions / Restrictions
 - Non-weight bearing
 - Continue use of hinged knee brace or dynamic PCL brace
- Range of Motion
 - **Prone only**
 - Active assisted extension 90-0 degrees
 - Passive flexion 0-90 degrees
 - Short crank (90mm) ergometry
 - Ensure full extension
- Strengthening
 - Leg Press: 60-0 degree arc
 - SLR in all plane with progressive resistance
 - Multiangle quadriceps isometrics at 60 and 20 degrees
- Modalities PRN

Postoperative weeks 6 - 12

- Precautions / Restrictions
 - May discontinue hinged knee brace / Continue use of PCL brace
 - Progressive weight bearing from Flat-foot to Full weight bearing
 - Discontinue crutches with gait is non-antalgic (6-8 weeks)
- Range of Motion
 - Advance knee ROM

- Initiate forward step up program (6-8 weeks)
- Being stationary bike with low resistance settings and leg presses to a maximum of 70 degrees of knee flexion
- AAROM exercises
- Strengthening
 - Leg press & mini squats (0-60 degree arc)
 - Standard ergometry (if knee ROM > 115 degrees)
 - Stairmaster (6-8 weeks)
 - Proprioception Training
 - Retrograde treadmill ambulation
 - Initiate step down program (8-10 weeks)
- Modalities PRN

Postoperative weeks 12-20

- Continue dynamic PCL brace, if provided
- Maintain full ROM: AAROM exercises
- Strengthening
 - Leg Press: 0-80 degree arc
 - Advance proprioception training
 - Agility exercises
 - Versaclimber
 - Retrograde treadmill
 - Quadriceps stretching

Postoperative weeks 20-26

- Start forward running (if descend 8" step satisfactorily)
- Continue lower extremity strengthening, flexibility, proprioception and agility programs
- Initiate plyometric program (if sufficient strength base)
- Functional Hop Test (> 85% of contralateral)
- Isokinetic test for quad strength difference at least 85% of contralateral

Postoperative month 6+

- Dynamic brace can be discontinued if used
- Continue lower extremity strengthening, flexibility, proprioceptive and agility programs
- Advance plyometric program
- Advance agility and sport specific program