**ACL reconstruction**

*Patient and therapist information sheet*

**Procedure details:**  Arthroscopic surgery to reconstruct the native Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL). This involves using Autograft (your own tissue) or Allograft (donated tissue) or synthetic materials as a scaffold to perform the job of the native ACL, whilst your body grows into this scaffold or replaces the tissue.

**Goals of treatment:** To improve knee stability and function with reconstructing normal anatomy to the knee and assist in rehabilitation to prevent further knee injuries. Prevention of meniscal tears, instability and arthritis that would continue with an unstable knee. Allowing the ACL to heal, “ligamentise” (heal with your cells and collagen) whilst focussing on specific exercises to improve strength, coordination and function of the knee and supporting structures are the main aims of rehabilitation.

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| Phase | Time (Weeks) | Restrictions | Exercises |
| 1Rest and ROM | 0-6 | No open chain exercises, no kicking, running or sports other than physio directed rehabilitation | Aim is to let knee settle, increase range of motionRest, massage, compression, ice as neededFoot supported (closed chain) range of motionQuads activation and controlling exercises |
| 2ROM and strength | 6-16 | No running, no stepping or sports. | Quads strengthening, cycling, rowing, squats, return to guided gym exercises. |
| 3Strength and balance | 16- 8 months | Start running at 5 months, no stepping or sports | Abductor strengthening balance exercisesQuads and hams strengthRunning, cycling, rowing, squats, presses |
| 4 Balance and sports training | 8-12 months | No contact sport unless high level and MRI confirming graft healing. | Sport specific trainingFIFA 11+ warm up protocolAbductor strengtheningEducation on prevention – jumping mechanicsSports clearance with single leg jump, comparison strength testing |
| 5 Sports ready and prevention | 12 months – onwards |  | FIFA 11+ warm up protocolContinue with strength work and improved jumping mechanics |