

POST-OPERATIVE REHABILITATION PROTOCOL

# ACL Reconstruction with Meniscus Root Repair

William McLaughlin, MD | Sports Medicine Surgery | Advanced Bone & Joint

## Phase 1 | 0-4 Weeks

### GOALS FOR THIS PHASE

- Protect the graft and root repair with strict NWB.
- Maintain brace locked in extension for ambulation and sleeping.
- Achieve and maintain full passive knee extension.
- Progress flexion ROM to 0-90°.
- Initiate quadriceps activation and patellar mobility.

### Weight Bearing & Bracing

- NWB on the operative extremity.
- Brace locked at 0° for ambulation and sleeping.

### Range of Motion

- ROM: 0-90° with emphasis on full extension.

### Therapeutic Exercises

- Patella mobilization.
- SLR supine with brace locked at 0°; quad sets.
- Ankle pumps.
- Short-crank (90 mm) ergometry.

## Phase 2 | 4-6 Weeks

### GOALS FOR THIS PHASE

- Remain NWB with brace locked in extension for ambulation.
- Progress flexion ROM to 0-125° while maintaining full extension.
- Continue quadriceps activation and patellar mobility.

### Weight Bearing & Bracing

- Remain NWB with brace locked in full extension during ambulation.

### Range of Motion

- ROM: 0-125° (maintain full extension).

### Therapeutic Exercises

- Continue patellar mobilization.
- Continue SLRs.
- Continue ankle pumps.

## Phase 3 | 6-14 Weeks

### GOALS FOR THIS PHASE

- Begin TTWB and progress to 50% WB, then WBAT by 8 weeks as tolerated.
- Wean from crutches; discontinue brace around 8 weeks if quadriceps control allows.
- Advance lower-extremity strength and neuromuscular control.
- Introduce agility and cardiovascular conditioning.

### Weight Bearing & Bracing

- Begin TTWB and progress to 50% WB and WBAT by 8 weeks as tolerated.
- Wean from crutches; anticipate discontinuation of brace around 8 weeks once able to WBAT with quadriceps control.

### Therapeutic Exercises

- Progressive squat program.
- Initiate step-down program.
- Leg press, lunges.
- Isotonic knee extensions (90°-40°, closed chain preferred).
- Agility exercises with sport cord.
- VersaClimber / NordicTrack.
- Retrograde treadmill ambulation.

## Phase 4 | 14-22 Weeks

### GOALS FOR THIS PHASE

- Initiate forward running program once 8" step-down is satisfactory.
- Advance sport-specific agility drills.
- Begin plyometric program.

### Therapeutic Exercises

- Begin forward running (treadmill) program when 8" step-down is satisfactory.

- Continue strengthening & flexibility program.
- Advance sport-specific agility drills.
- Start plyometric program.

## Phase 5 | > 22 Weeks

### GOALS FOR THIS PHASE

- Advance plyometric program.
- Return to sport when MD-directed criteria are met.

### Therapeutic Exercises

- Advance plyometric program.
- Return to sport — MD directed.

### Note

- May require Functional Sports Assessment (FSA) 5-6 months post-op for clearance to return to sport.

*This protocol is a general guideline. Progression is patient-specific and at the discretion of William McLaughlin, MD.*