



## Posterior Cruciate Ligament (PCL) Reconstruction Physical Therapy Protocol

The intent of this protocol is to provide guidelines for your patient's therapy progression. It is not intended to serve as a recipe for treatment. We request that the PT/PTA/ATC use appropriate clinical decision-making skills when progressing a patient forward.

**Please call (833) 872-4477 to obtain the operative report from our office prior to the first post-op visit.** Please contact our office if there are any questions about the protocol or your patient's progression.

Please keep in mind common problems that may arise following PCL reconstruction. If you encounter any of these problems please evaluate, assess, and treat as you feel appropriate, maintaining AHI precautions and guidelines at all times. Gradual progression is essential to avoid flare-ups. If a flare-up occurs, back off with therapeutic exercises until it subsides. Please reference the exercise progression sheet for timelines and use the following precautions during your treatments.

Thank you for progressing all patients appropriately. **Successful treatment requires a team approach, and the PT/PTA/ATC is a critical part of the team! Please contact AHI at any time with your input on how to improve the therapy protocol.**

Please send therapy progress notes and renewal therapy prescription requests with the patient or by fax to (630) 323-5625. Notes by fax must be sent 3 days prior to the patient's visit to internally process this request. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

### *Please Use Appropriate Clinical Judgment During All Treatment Progressions*

#### **Protective Phase: day after surgery – end of week 4:**

**Brace:** Braced in full extension

**Weight Bearing:** Touch down to 40%

**ROM Goals:**

**Extension:** Full with posterior leg supported at all times to protect from tibial sag

**Flexion:** 60 degrees

#### **Therapeutic Exercise:**

##### **Strengthening:**

Ankle ROM

Quad sets; Russian stim as needed

Three-way leg raises in brace (not flexion)

**\*\* No open chain hamstring strengthening \*\***

#### **Manual Therapy:**

Patella mobilization

Passive knee flexion to 60 degrees with anterior tibial force

Peri-patellar soft tissue mobilization

**Cryotherapy:** Six to eight times a day for 20 minutes



**Early Strengthening Phase: week 5 – end of week 8:**

**Brace:** Open to 30 degrees weeks 5 and 6; open to 60 degrees weeks 7 and 8.

**Weight Bearing:** Progress to full WB by week 8

**ROM Goals:**

**Extension:** Full

**Flexion:** 90 degrees week 6, progressing to 110 degrees by week 8

**Therapeutic Exercise:**

**Strengthening:**

Ankle ROM and strengthening

Quad sets

Four-way Straight leg raising in brace

Mini squats weeks 7 and 8 (0-45 degrees)

Step downs weeks 7 and 8 (0-45 degrees)

\*\* No open chain hamstring strengthening \*\*

**Proprioception:** One leg balance

**Core:** Abdominal and lumbar exercises

**Manual Therapy:**

Patella mobilization

Passive knee flexion to 90 degrees \*\*with anterior tibial force

Peri-patellar soft tissue mobilization

Prone quadriceps stretching to 90 degrees

**Advanced Strengthening Phase: week 9 – end of week 12:**

**Brace:** Open

**Weight Bearing:** Full

**ROM Goals:**

**Extension:** Full

**Flexion:** Progress to full

**Therapeutic Exercise:**

**Strengthening:**

Four-way straight leg raising in brace

Half squats weeks 10 to 12 (0-90 degrees)

Step downs weeks 10 to 12

Slow progression of multi-plane closed chain activities

\*\* No open chain hamstring strengthening \*\*

**Proprioception:** Wobble and BAPS boards

**Core:** Standing trunk activities

**Conditioning:** UBE/Bike (minimum resistance)



**Advanced Strengthening Phase: week 9 – end of week 12 (continued):**

**Manual Therapy:**

- Patellar mobilization
- Passive knee flexion to 125 degrees with anterior tibial force
- Peri-patellar soft tissue mobilization
- Prone quadriceps stretching to 125 degrees
- Soft tissue flexibility maintenance

**Functional Training and Return to Sports Phase: > 12 weeks post op:**

**Brace:** Functional brace worn

**Therapeutic Exercise:**

**Strengthening:**

- Progression of multi-plane closed chain activities
- Progression of open chain activities
- Progress impact control and movement control activities (low velocity, single plane to high velocity, multi-plane)
- Sport specific activities begun at 9 months

**Conditioning:** Running straight at 6 months

**Proprioception:** Single leg activities

**Advanced Core Strengthening:** Functional standing trunk activities

**Note:** Return to sport based on provider team input and appropriate testing. All times and exercises are to serve as guidelines. Actual progress may be faster or slower, depending on each individual patient, as agreed upon by the patient and his/her team of providers.