

Rehabilitation Protocol:

Posterior Cruciate Ligament (PCL) Reconstruction

OMAR RAHMAN, MD, MBA

Orthopedic Surgeon | Sports Medicine

ARTHROSCOPIC SURGERY | JOINT RECONSTRUCTION



Name: _____

Date: _____

Diagnosis: _____

Date of Surgery: _____

Phase I (Weeks 1-4)

- **Weightbearing**
 - Weeks 0-2: Toe Touch Weightbearing
 - Weeks 3-4: Weightbearing as tolerated with crutches (may be modified if concomitant posterolateral corner reconstruction, meniscal repair/meniscal transplant or articular cartilage procedure is performed)
- **Hinged Knee Brace**
 - Locked in full extension for ambulation and sleeping (**Weeks 0-1**)
 - Locked in full extension for ambulation – removed for therapy sessions (**Weeks 2-4**)
- **Range of Motion**
 - **Weeks 0-1:** None
 - **Weeks 1-2:** PROM 0-30°
 - **Weeks 2-4:** PROM 0-90° (MAINTAIN ANTERIOR PRESSURE ON PROXIMAL TIBIA AS KNEE IS FLEXED FROM WEEK 1-4—NEED TO PREVENT POSTERIOR SAGGING AT ALL TIMES)
- **Therapeutic Exercises**
 - Quad/Hamstring sets and ankle pumps
 - Straight-Leg Raise with brace in full extension until quad strength prevents extension lag
 - Hip abduction/adduction (RESISTANCE MUST BE PROXIMAL TO THE KNEE)
 - Hamstring/Calf stretch: Calf press with TheraBand progressing to standing toe raises with knee in full extension

Phase II (Weeks 5-12)

- **Weightbearing:** As tolerated with crutches-- discontinue crutch use at 6-8 weeks post-op
- **Hinged Knee Brace**
 - **Weeks 5-7:** unlocked for gait training/exercise only
 - **Weeks 8-10:** unlocked for all activities
 - **Discontinue brace at 8 weeks post-op**
- **Range of Motion**—Maintain full knee extension—work on progressive knee flexion (Goal of 110° by week 6)
- **Therapeutic Exercises**
 - **Weeks 5-7:** Gait training, wall slides (0-30°), Mini-squats (0-30°), Leg press (0-60°)
 - **Weeks 8-12:** Stationary bicycle (with seat higher than normal), Stairmaster, Closed-chain terminal knee extension, Leg press (0-90°), Balance and proprioception activities

Phase III (Weeks 12-9 months)

- **Weightbearing:** Full weightbearing with normalized gait pattern
- **Range of Motion** – Full/Painless ROM
- **Therapeutic Exercises**
 - Advance closed chain strengthening exercises, progress with proprioception/balance activities
 - Maintain flexibility
 - **Begin treadmill walking – progress to jogging**

Phase IV (9 months and beyond)

- Maintain strength, endurance and function – initiate plyometric program
 - Begin cutting exercises and sport-specific drills
- **Return to sports as tolerated**

Comments: AVOID ACTIVE HAMSTRING ACTIVITY AND ACTIVE KNEE EXTENSION FROM 70-90° UNTIL POST-OP WEEK 4

Frequency: 2-3 times per week

Duration: 6-8 weeks

Signature: _____

Date: _____