

ACL + MCL Reconstruction Rehabilitation Protocol

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PT Frequency: 2-4 times per week

ROM Restrictions: Full PROM beginning POD1. Active ROM 0-90° x 2 weeks, 0-125° weeks 3-6, Full ROM weeks 6+

Brace: Weeks 0-6 – Locked in full extension for sleeping and all WB. Off **only** for hygiene. When not sleeping or ambulating, unlocked brace once good quad control

Weeks 0-6 (Phase I)

- **Weight Bearing:** TTWB with crutches x 6 weeks
- **Brace:** Weeks 0-6 – Locked in full extension for sleeping and all WB. Off **only** for hygiene.
 - When not sleeping or ambulating, unlocked brace once good quad control
- **Range of Motion:** ROM: 0-90° x 2 weeks, 0-125° weeks 3-6, Full ROM weeks 6+
- **Exercises:** Heel slides, quad sets with brace locked at 0°, patellar mobilization, SLR with brace locked at 0°, short crank (90mm) ergometry, after 2 weeks flexion extension wall slides

Weeks 6-12 (Phase II):

- **Weight Bearing:** Progress to WBAT
- **Brace:** Discontinue once good quad control, begin to wean off crutches
- **ROM:** Full active and passive ROM
- **Exercises:**
 - Sit and reach for hamstrings
 - Progressive squat program
 - Initiate step down program
 - Balance
 - Double leg bridges
 - Begin cord exercise

Weeks 12-20 (Phase III):

- **Weight Bearing:** Full
- **Brace:** Discontinue
- **ROM:** Full, caution with flexion >90° to protect meniscus
- **Exercises:** Sport specific rehab, no gravity running

Weeks 24+ (Phase IV):

- Running progression
- Agility Exercises
- Multidirectional motions
- Functional sports test

Exercise	Week															
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	12	16	20	24		
Initial Exercises:																
ROM Goals	0-90°				0-125°				Progress to full							
Flexion/extension, heel slides																
Flexion/extension- seated/ calf-assisted																
Patella/Tendon mobilization																
Quad Series	0° ISOs, SLR				60° ISOs				70-30° arc-resisted				Full arc resisted			
Hamstring Sets																
Sit and Reach for Hamstrings																
Ankle Pumps																
Crutch weaning	NWB															
Heel prop knee extension stretch																
SLR (w/ brace until quad control restored)																
Toe and heel raises																
Weight-bearing Strength Exercises:																
Double Knee Bends																
Double Leg Bridges																
Step up/Lunge Progression																
Beginning cord exercises																
Proprioception/Balance Training																
Dead Lift (2 → 1)																
Squat/Leg Press (ISO → reps, 2 → 1 leg)						0-45°			0-70° (70° Max on press)							
Sports Test Exercises																
Cardiovascular Exercises:																
Bike with both legs-no resistance																
Bike with both legs- resistance																
Aqua jogging																
Treadmill-walking 7% incline																
Swimming with fins-light flutter kick																
Elliptical Trainer																
Rowing																
Stair stepper																
*Cardio Exercises	Must tolerate daily walking with no limp & no significant increase in pain/swelling prior to initiating WB cardio (walk, elliptical, stepper)															
Agility Exercises:																
Running Progression*																
Initial-Single Plane																
Advance-Multi Directional																
Functional Sports Test																
High Level Activities:																
Golf Progression																
Outdoor biking, hiking, running																
Return to Full Sport at 9 months post-op																

Adapted from Dr. Jorge Chahla's post-operative protocol created by Howard Head Physical Therapy, Jill Monson, PT, OCS and Jon Schoenecker, PT, OCS, CSCS