

MPFL Reconstruction Rehabilitation Protocol

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Diagnosis: Patella Instability, MPFL Tear

PT Frequency: 2-4 times per week

Brace: Locked in extension x 2 weeks, then progress per below

Weightbearing: WBAT

PHASE I (Weeks 0 – 2): Period of protection, decrease edema, home exercises

- **Weightbearing:** Weight bear as tolerated with crutches and brace
- **Hinged Knee Brace:**
 - Worn at all times during day/night; ok to remove for hygiene
 - Brace locked at 0 degrees for ambulation and sleeping
- **Range of Motion:** 0-30° with emphasis on full extension
- **Home Exercises:** Heel slides, quad sets with brace locked at 0°, patellar mobilization, straight leg raise in brace locked at 0°, calf/ankle pumps

Phase II (Weeks 2 – 4)

- **Weightbearing:** Weight bear as tolerated with crutches and brace
- **Hinged Knee Brace:** Brace locked at 30° for sleeping and ambulation
- **Range of Motion:** 0-60°, maintain full extension
- **Therapeutic Exercises:**
 - Advance Phase I exercises
 - SLR, quad sets, ankle pumps
 - Proprioception training

Phase III (Weeks 4 – 6)

- **Weightbearing:** Weight bear as tolerated with crutches and brace
- **Hinged Knee Brace:** Brace locked at 60° for sleeping and ambulation
- **Range of Motion:** 0-90°, maintain full extension
- **Therapeutic Exercises:** progress weight bearing flexibility, begin toe raises, closed chain quad/hamstring work, floor-based core/glute work, balance exercises, and stationary bike

Phase IV (Weeks 6 - 14)

- **Weightbearing:** Weight bear as tolerated
- **Brace:** Discontinue brace once good quad control
- **Range of Motion:** Full range of motion
- **Therapeutic Exercises:** advance phase III exercises **PLUS** initiate elliptical, progressive squat program, initiate step down program, leg press, lunges, isotonic knee extensions (90-40 degrees, closed chain preferred), agility exercises, retrograde treadmill ambulation, in-line jogging (12 weeks) under PT supervision

Phase V (Weeks 22+)

- **Weightbearing:** Full weightbearing without brace
- **Brace:** No brace
- **Range of Motion:** Full range of motion
- **Therapeutic Exercises:** advance phase IV exercises, advance plyometric program, flexibility/strengthening and progression of function
 - Forward/backward running, cutting, grapevine
 - Initiate plyometric program and sport-specific drills at 4 months
 - Return to play as tolerated after 4 months post-op when cleared by MD