

# Patellar Tendon Autograft ACL Reconstruction Rehabilitation Protocol

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## **Phase 1 - 0-4 weeks**

### **Weightbearing**

0-2 weeks: Touch-down with crutches

2-4 weeks: Full in brace with emphasis on foot flat ambulation

### **Brace**

0-2 weeks: Locked in full extension for ambulation and sleeping

*May remove brace while sleeping after first postoperative visit 7-10 days after surgery*

2-4 weeks: Unlocked for ambulation

### **ROM**

As tolerated

### **Exercises**

Heel slides, quad/hamstring sets, patellar mobs, gastroc/soleus stretch, NMES to improve quad contraction, side-lying hip/core

SLR w/ brace in full extension until quad strength prevents extension lag

## **Phase II - 4-12 weeks**

### **Weightbearing**

Full

### **Brace**

Discontinue at four weeks if patient has no extension lag

### **ROM**

Full

### **Exercises**

Toe raises, closed chain quads, balance exercises, hamstring curls, stationary bike, step-ups, front and side planks, hip/glute/core, pool

***MD recheck at 7-10 days, 6 weeks, 4 months***

***Avoid NSAIDs until 4 weeks after surgery***

**Phase III - 12-16 weeks****Weightbearing**

Full

**Brace**

None

**ROM**

Full

**Exercises**

Advanced closed chain strengthening, progress proprioception activities, StairMaster, elliptical and running straight ahead

**Phase IV - 16-24 weeks****Weightbearing**

Full

**Brace**

None

**ROM**

Full

**Exercises**

**16 weeks:** Begin jumping

**20 weeks:** Advance running to sprinting, backward running, cutting/pivoting/changing direction, initiate plyometric program and sport-specific drills

**22 weeks:** Advance as tolerated

RSE completed at 26 weeks

*Completion of RSE (Return to Sport Evaluation) not mandatory, but recommended at approximately 22 weeks post-op for competitive athletes returning to play after rehab*

**Phase V - 6+ months****Weightbearing**

Full

**Brace**

None

**ROM**

Full and pain-free

**Exercises**

Gradual return to sports participation after completion of RSE Maintenance program based on RSE Maintenance program based on RSE