



PT Protocol
ACL Reconstruction
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Phase 1: 0-6 Weeks

Goals

Protect graft, decrease pain and swelling, restore ambulation, activate quad, ADL strategies

Brace/crutches

Brace used when not in PT for first 6 weeks post op
Post op brace locked in extension when weight bearing, WBAT with crutches
When not weight bearing may go 0-90 degrees first 2 weeks
Advance brace flexion as tolerated

Range of Motion

Guidelines for range of motion when supervised in PT
0-1 week: emphasis on getting full extension
1-6 weeks: gradually progress to full flexion while maintaining extension

Strength

May use bike for range of motion and early conditioning
Quad sets and straight leg raises
Single leg balance
Hip abduction strength
Core strength
Upper body ergometer



Criteria for Ambulation without Crutches or Brace

Range of motion within 3 degrees of full extension and flexion of at least 90 degrees
Straight leg raise X 20 without a lag
Single leg balance for 20 seconds
Demonstration of normal gait in PT

Phase 2: 6-12 Weeks

Goals

Discontinue Brace, normalize gait, advance strengthening, prepare for jogging
*May introduce blood flow restriction (BFR) training

Range of Motion

Progress to full by 10 weeks post op

Strength

Short arc leg press and low step ups
Focus on closed chain, but may do short arc quad work early
Romanian dead lifts
Body weight and wall squats, progress to single leg squats and lunges
Hip abduction strength include lateral band walks
Core to include bridging

Conditioning

Advance intensity of stationary bike, add elliptical or rowing machine when ready
*Balance and proprioception - may introduce perturbation training

Criteria for Jogging

12 weeks post op, essentially full range of motion, one minute of single leg squats continuously



Phase 3: 3-6 Months

Goals

Transition to home or gym program
Introduce dynamic movement and advance strength and conditioning

Range of Motion

*Should have full range. If not alert physician

Strength

Weighted squats, dead lifts, power cleans
Introduce open chain quad strength, balance with open chain hamstring work (e.g. Russian hamstrings)
BFR
Core

Conditioning

Bike, elliptical, rower
Jogging
Swimming or aqua jogging

Plyometrics and Agility

Speed ladder, jump rope, box jumps, bounding
Balance and perturbation work



Phase 4: Return to Full Activity

Goals

Sport specific drills advancing to return to play

Strength and Conditioning

Progress strength training and fitness

“Olympic” lifts

May advance to full sprint

Plyometrics and Agility

Agility and cutting drills advancing to full speed

Advance box jumps, broad jumps, single leg hops

High level balance and perturbation work

Criteria for Return to Play

Quad and hamstring strength at 90%

90% of normal on all single leg hop tests

Full speed on agility testing (figure 8, shuttle run, etc)

MD approval