



**Department of Orthopaedic Surgery  
Sports Medicine and Shoulder Service**

**Knee MCL Repair/Reconstruction Rehab Protocol Prescription**

**Patient Name:**

**Date:**

**Diagnosis: MCL tear**

**Frequency: 2-3 visits/week    Duration: 4 months**

**Week 1-2**

- Ankle pumps every hour
- Post -op brace to maintain full extension.
- Quad sets & SLR (Brace on) with no lag
- TTWB with crutches
- Ice or Cryocuff Unit on knee for 20-30 minutes every hour
- Passive ROM exercises: Limits: 0 to 40 degrees.
- NO Hip adductor strengthening

**Week 3-4 (ROM 0-75deg, TTWB)**

- Supervised PT 2- 3 times a week (may need to adjust based on insurance)
- Continue SLR's in brace with foot straight up, quad isometric sets, ankle pumps
- No weight bearing with knee in flexed position, TTWB with brace locked in full extension
- Patellar mobilization exercises
- Brace locked in full extension for ambulation and sleeping, and may unlock for sitting with limit 0-75deg.
- May **not** remove brace for HEP
- NO Hip adductor strengthening

**Week 5 (ROM as tolerated, TTWB)**

- Continue with above exercises/ice treatments
- Advance ROM as tolerated with no limits with brace on

- Stationary bike for range of motion (short crank or high seat, no resistance) Ok to remove brace for bike here
- No weight bearing with knee in flexed position, continue TTWB with brace locked in full extension
- Perform scar message aggressively
- Progressive SLR program for quad strength with brace on - start with 1 lb, progress 1 -2 lbs per week
- Hamstring and hip PREs
- Seated leg extension (90 to 40 degrees) against gravity with no weight
- NO side lying Hip adductor strengthening

#### **Week 6 (TTWB)**

- Continue all exercises
- No weight bearing with knee in flexed position, TTWB with brace locked in full extension
- Flexion exercises seated AAROM
- AAROM (using good leg to assist) exercises (4-5x/ day) with brace on
- Continue ROM stretching and overpressure into extension
- SLR's - with brace on
- NO side lying Hip adductor strengthening
- Leg press 0-70 arc of motion

#### **Week 7 (WBAT)**

- Continue above exercises
- Start WBAT with brace on in full extension and D/C crutches when stable
- Hamstring and calf stretching
- Self ROM 4-5x/day using other leg to provide ROM
- Advance ROM as tolerated - no limits, may remove brace for ROM
- Regular stationary bike if Flexion > 115
- Heel raises with brace on
- Hip strengthening No side lying hip adduction

#### **Week 8**

- Continue above exercises
- Unlock brace for ambulation when quad control adequate
- Mini squats (0-60 degrees)
- 4 inch step ups
- Isotonic leg press (0 - 90 degrees)
- Lateral step out with therabands
- Hip strengthening

#### **Week 9**

- D/C brace if quad control adequate  
Advance ROM, Goal: 0 to 115 degrees, walking with no limp
- Add ball squats
- Initiate retro treadmill with 3% incline (for quad control)

- Increase resistance on stationary bike
- Mini-squats and weight shifts
- Sport cord (bungee) walking
- 8 inch step ups
- 4 inch step downs

### **Week 10**

- Begin resistance for open chain knee extension
- Swimming allowed, flutter kick only
- Bike outdoors, level surfaces only
- Progress balance and board throws
- Plyometric leg press
- 6-8 inch step downs
- Start slide board
- Jump down's (double stance landing)
- Progress to light running program and light sport specific drills if:
  - Quad strength > 75% contralateral side
  - Active ROM 0 to > 125 degrees
  - Functional hop test >70% contralateral side
  - Swelling < 1cm at joint line
  - No pain
  - Demonstrates good control on step down

### **Week 11-22**

- Stairmaster machine
- If full ROM, quad strength > 80% contralateral side, functional hop test >85% contralateral side, satisfactory clinical exam:
  - Progress to home program for running. Progress to hops, jumps, cuts and sports specific drills. Begin to wean from supervised therapy.

### **4-5 months**

- Criteria to return to sports (functional testing at 5 mos, then monthly until passing criteria)
  - Full Active ROM
  - Quadriceps >90% contralateral side
  - Satisfactory clinical exam
  - Functional hop test > 90% contralateral side
  - Completion of a running program