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Posterior Cruciate Ligament Reconstruction

Post-Op Physical Therapy Protocol

Name: _____ Date of Surgery: _____

Procedure: R / L PCL Reconstruction

Frequency: 2-3 times per week for 6 weeks

PHASE I (Weeks 0 – 6): Period of protection, decrease edema, activate quadriceps

- **Weightbearing:** WBAT in brace locked in extension with crutches, okay to unlock brace at week 4 if good quad control (may be modified if posterolateral corner reconstruction, meniscus repair/transplant or articular cartilage surgery performed at time of PCLR)
- **Hinged Knee Brace:**
 - **Weeks 0-2:** Locked in full extension for ambulation and sleeping (remove for PT)
 - **Weeks 2-4:** Locked in full extension for ambulation, remove for sleeping
 - **Weeks 4-6:** Unlock at 0-90° for gait training/exercises
- **Range of Motion:** None week 0-1; then initiate PROM only with goal of 90° of passive flexion by week 6 – take care to prevent posterior sagging during ROM exercises
- **Therapeutic Exercises:** calf pumps, gentle patellar mobs, quad sets, SLR in brace locked in extension, standing hip extension, hamstring/calf stretching. **Avoid active hamstring activation until 8 weeks.**
- **Modalities:** Per therapist, including electrical stimulation, ultrasound, heat (before), ice (after)

PHASE II (Weeks 6 – 12)

- **Weightbearing:** Full, wean crutches as able
- **Hinged Knee Brace:** Unlock for all activities; discontinue completely at week 8 if good quad control
- **Range of Motion:** Progress to AROM, progress to full ROM by week 12
- **Therapeutic Exercises:** Advance Phase I exercises, advance floor-based core/glute exercises; SLR without brace if good quad control, increase closed chain activities 0-60° by week 8 and 0-90° by week 12 (wall-slides, mini-squats, leg press), initiate balance and proprioception exercises
 - Begin gentle stationary bicycle at 8 weeks
- **Modalities:** Per therapist, including electrical stimulation, ultrasound, heat (before), ice (after)

PHASE III (Weeks 12 – 16)

- Advance Phase II exercises, advance closed chain quad exercises, work on functional balance and core strengthening; progress balance/proprioception exercises, start slow treadmill walking and progress to jogging

Phase IV (Weeks 16 – 24)

- Advance Phase III exercises; maximize single leg dynamic and static balance and strength; initiate light plyometrics; begin jumping at 16 weeks; advance to sprinting, cutting, and pivoting at 20 weeks

Phase V (>6 months): Gradual return to athletic activity

- Gradual return to sports participation after completion of functional sports assessment
- Encourage maintenance program based off functional sports assessment
- Return to sport-specific activity and impact when cleared around 6+ months postop