

PHYSICAL THERAPY PROTOCOL FOR MENISCECTOMY, CHONDROPLASTY AND DEBRIDEMENT



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The intent of this protocol is to provide the therapist with guidelines of the post-operative rehabilitation course after an arthroscopic meniscectomy. It should not be a substitute for one's clinical decision making regarding the progression of a patient's post-operative course based on their physical exam findings, individual progress, and/or the presence of post-operative complications. The therapist should consult the referring physician with any questions or concerns.

PHASE I (0-2 weeks)

Goals

- Control inflammation and pain
- Achieve full ROM
- Regain quadriceps control
- Full weight-bearing

Brace

- None
- Ice 3-4 times per day for 20 minutes and after every therapy session

Weight-bearing Status

- Weight-bearing as tolerated with crutches as needed for 1-5 days until normal gait is re-established

Therapeutic Exercises

- Straight leg raises in all planes
- Heel slides, calf pumps, quadriceps sets
- Electrical stimulation as needed to control edema and regain quad tone
- Wall slides
- Patellar mobilization
- Balancing activities on a stable platform with eyes open and closed
- Quad, hamstring, gastroc, ITB stretching
- Stationary bike with low resistance and high seat
- Toe raise

PHASE II (2- 6 weeks)

Criteria

- Good quad set, SLR without extension lag
- Full AROM

PHASE II (continued)

Goals

- Maintain full active ROM
- Progress with strengthening and endurance
- Gradual return to functional activities

Brace/Weight-bearing status

- Full weight-bearing, no crutches or brace
- Use ice after therapy

Therapeutic Exercises

- Mini-squats (0-45 degrees)
- Stationary Bike (high seat, low tension)
- Closed chain extension (leg press:0-60 degrees)
- Hamstring curls
- Pool walking/jogging
- Stair climbing (up/down, forward. backwards), StairMaster
- Elliptical trainer, cross-country skiing
- Begin jogging
- *Plyometrics*
 - Stair jogging
 - Box jumps at 6 and 12 inch heights
- *Proprioception*
 - Mini-tramp standing and bouncing
 - Unstable platform (BAPS) with eyes open and closed
 - Ball throwing and catching from stable surface, then advance to unstable surface

PHASE III (6 weeks +)

Criteria

- Normal gait
- Full, painless range of motion

Goals

- Progress with strength, power, and proprioception
- Return to full activities by 4-8 weeks depending on progress
- Progress with functional and sports-specific training

Therapeutic Exercise

- Continue with ROM and strengthening exercises as above
- May progress with strengthening as tolerated
- Sports specific drills

Criteria for Return to Sports

- Full, painless range of motion
- 90% hamstring and quadriceps strength of contralateral side
- No effusion
- Clearance from Physician