

POSTEROLATERAL CORNER RECONSTRUCTION

Post-Operative Physical Therapy Protocol



SCAN FOR THE
ONLINE VERSION



Stanford
MEDICINE

Dear Colleague,

I appreciate your partnership in the rehabilitation of this very special patient of ours. I have instructed the patient that you will be using this protocol. My belief is that the biggest predictor of success is what the patient does at home and consistently. **They should view you not just as a therapist but as a highly educated and skilled teacher** and the patient *must* be an active participant in the rehab process.

To facilitate this, I have included a copy of the rehab protocols I would like the patient to focus on at each time point in the rehab process. Please assist me by encouraging and teaching our mutual patient their home exercises as well.

With your help and the active participation of our patient, I know we can have another fantastic knee.

Please do not hesitate to reach out directly to me and my team with any questions at any time.

Respectfully,



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	WEEKS 0-2	WEEKS 2-6	WEEKS 6-10	WEEKS 11-12	MONTHS 3-6	MONTHS 6+
Weight bearing	Footflat <i>Crutches</i>	Footflat <i>Crutches</i>	+25% per week <i>Full by 9-10 wks</i>	Full	Full	Full
Range of motion	0-45° <i>Brace setting</i>	0-90°	Advance	Advance	Full	Full
Brace	Locked straight <i>Walk, sleep; 0-45° sitting</i>	0-90° <i>Off for PT</i>	D/C off crutches <i>Good quad control</i>	None	None	None
Strengthening	Quad sets, SLR <i>Patellar mobs</i>	Hip, core <i>No hamstrings, no varus</i>	Hip, core	Closed chain 10-25% BW <i>Step-ups, balance</i>	Advance closed chain <i>Hamstrings OK</i>	Plyometrics <i>Hops, slideboard</i>
Impact and sport	None	None	None	Stationary bike	Stairmaster <i>Elliptical</i>	Jogging, running <i>Sport ~6-9 months</i>

As tolerated means pain during exercise no more than 2/10 above baseline. Avoid pushing into pain.

WEEKS 0-2

- **Brace at all times except for grooming** (see below for ROM restrictions and brace settings).
- **Foot-flat weight bearing with the brace in full extension when ambulating.**
- Brace locked in full extension when sleeping.
- When not ambulating or sleeping, brace set 0 to 45° when sitting or performing PT.
- Quad sets and straight leg raises (with the brace locked in extension); patellar mobilizations, ankle pumps.
- **Avoid tibial rotation, hyperextension, and varus force to the knee through 6 weeks.**

WEEKS 2-6

- Continue foot-flat weight bearing.
- **Brace set 0 to 90° when ambulating and at rest;** may remove for PT and ROM exercises.
- Quad sets and straight leg raises with the brace until able to do them without an extension lag.
- If no extension lag, quad sets and SLRs can be done without the brace.
- **No active isolated hamstring exercises;** hip and core exercises while avoiding knee varus stress.

WEEKS 6–10

- **Begin 25% weight bearing, increasing by 25% every week until full weight bearing by 9 to 10 weeks;** discontinue crutches when gait normalizes.
- Discontinue the brace once off crutches with good quad control.

WEEKS 11–12

- Limited closed chain resistance weight training (10 to 25% of body weight during leg press and mini-squat).
- Stationary bike, balance exercises, step-ups; progress hip and core work while avoiding varus.
- **No active isolated hamstring exercises (curls). No kneeling for 12 weeks.**

WEEK 12 TO 6 MONTHS

- Advance closed chain strengthening and proprioception; isolated hamstring exercises are okay.
- Stairmaster, elliptical, advance stationary bike.

MONTHS 6+

- **Progress to jogging and a running progression,** slideboard, single-leg hops, plyometrics.
- **Sport-specific drills with a gradual return to sport (around 6 to 9 months),** once Dr. Tummala clears the patient.

CRITERIA TO RETURN TO SPORT

- Full ROM compared with the uninvolved side.
- No effusion.
- Normal gait and pain-free activities of daily living.
- Quadriceps strength at least 90% of the uninvolved side.
- Single-leg hop tests at least 90% of the uninvolved side.
- Around 6 to 9 months after surgery.

WEEK-BY-WEEK PROGRESSION

EXERCISE	1	2	3	4 (1 mo)	5	6	7	8 (2 mo)	9	10	12 (3 mo)	16	20	24 (6 mo)
Initial Exercises														
Foot-flat WB with crutches														
Brace locked straight walking/sleep; 0-45° sitting														
Brace 0-90°, off for PT														
No rotation, hyperextension, varus														
No isolated hamstrings, no kneeling														
Quad sets, SLR, patellar mobs, ankle pumps														
Hip and core (avoid varus)														
Advanced Exercises														
WB +25% per week, full by 9-10 weeks														
D/C crutches, then brace														
Limited closed chain (10-25% BW), step-ups														
Advance closed chain, proprioception, hamstrings														
Stationary bike														
Stairmaster, elliptical														
High-Level Activities														
Jogging, plyometrics after 6 mo; sport ~6-9 mo														

This protocol is a general guideline and does not replace the clinical judgment of the treating therapist and surgeon. Please contact our office with any questions.