PRIME Orthopedics & Regenerative Center

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MENISCUS REPAIR

Physical Therapy Protocol

INTRODUCTION

Our protocol for rehabilitation following meniscal repair is divided into four phases: maximum protection, moderate protection, advanced phases and return to activity phase. These time periods are based primarily on the healing time of peripheral tissues, and the location of the tear.

Key factors in meniscal repairs include:

- Anatomical site of tear
- Suture fixation- can lead to failure if too vigorous
- Location of tear: anterior or posterior
- Other pathology (i.e., PCL, MCL, ACL)

PHASE I: MAXIMUM PROTECTION - WEEKS 1-6

STAGE I: IMMEDIATE POST-SURGERY DAY 1 - WEEK 3

- Ice, compression, elevation
- Electrical muscle stimulation
- Brace locked at 0°
- Range of motion 0°-90°
- Motion is limited for the first 7 to 21 days, depending on the development of scar tissue around repair site. Gradual increase in flexion ROM based on assessment of pain (0°-30° to 70°-50° to 70°-70° to 70°-90°)
- Patellar mobilization
- Scar tissue mobilization
- Passive range of motion

EXERCISES FOR STAGE I

- Quadriceps isometrics
- Hamstring isometrics (posterior no hamstring exercises for 6 weeks)
- Weight bearing as tolerated with crutches with brace locked at 0°
- Proprioception training

STAGE II: WEEKS 4-6

- Weight bearing-full without assisted device with brace locked at 0°

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EXERCISES FOR STAGE II

- PREprogram initiated
- Limited range knee extension (in range less likely to impinge or pull-on repair)
- Toe raises
- Mini squats
- Cycling
- Surgical tubing exercises in diagonal patterns
- Flexibility exercises

PHASE II: MODERATE PROTECTION – WEEKS 6-10

GOALS

- Increase strength, power, and endurance
- Normalize ROM of knee
- Prepare patient for advanced exercises

CRITERIA TO PROGRESS TO PHASE II

- Range of motion 0-90°
- No change in pain or effusion
- Quad control: "good MMT"

EXERCISES

- Strength: PREprogram continues
- Flexibility exercises are emphasized
- Lateral step-ups - 30 sec x 5 sets - 60 sec x 5 sets
- Mini squats
- Isokinetic exercises

ENDURANCE PROGRAM

- Swimming
- Cycling
- Nordic track
- Stair machines
- Pool running

COORDINATION PROGRAM

- Balance board
- High speed bands

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- Pool sprinting
- Backward walking

PLYOMETRIC PROGRAM

PHASE III: ADVANCED PHASE – WEEKS 11-15

GOALS

- Increase power, endurance
- Emphasize return to skill activities
- Prepare to return to full-unrestricted activities

CRITERIA TO PROGRESS TO PHASE lll

- Full non-painful ROM
- No pain or tenderness
- Satisfactory isokinetic test
- Satisfactory clinical exam

EXERCISES

- Continue all exercises in phase II
- Increase tubing program, plyometrics, pool program
- Initiate running program

PHASE IV: RETURN TO ACTIVITY

CRITERIA

- Full non-painful ROM
- Satisfactory clinical exam
- Satisfactory isokinetic test