
Patellar Realignment Protocol

General Guidelines:

Use crutches for 2 weeks and then wean off as tolerated
No Closed kinetic chain exercises for 6 weeks
No resisted open chain knee extension exercises
Showering without covering incision sites after suture removal
Sleep with brace locked at full extension for 4 weeks
Driving at 4-6 weeks post-op
Brace locked at zero degree for 6 weeks for ambulation and weight bearing activities
Watch for any increase in pain/swelling before introducing new exercises

0-6 weeks

ROM: 0-6 weeks: 0-90°

Brace: 0-4 weeks: Locked in full extension for all activities except therapeutic exercise
4-6 weeks: Unlock brace for sleeping, continue with brace locked in full extension for ambulation

Weight Bearing status: 0-2 weeks: toe touch weight bearing with two crutches
2-6 weeks: Wean off of crutches as tolerated by pain but must wear ROM brace locked at zero degree for ambulation

Therapeutic Exercise: Quad sets and isometric adduction with biofeedback for VMO
Passive seated knee flexion 0-90 degrees
Non-weight bearing gastrocnemius/soleus, hamstring stretches
SLR in four planes with brace locked in full extension
Resisted ankle ROM with Theraband
Patellar mobilization - NO forced lateral translation
Use NMES as needed to maintain quadriceps muscle tone

6-8 weeks

Brace: May unlock the brace for ambulation
Discontinue use for sleeping

ROM: Full ROM as tolerated

Weight bearing Status: As tolerated with unlocked brace

Therapeutic Exercise: Continue previous exercises as noted above in week 0-6
Progress towards weight bearing gastrocnemius/soleus stretching
Begin aquatic therapy, emphasis on normalization of gait
Balance exercises
Remove brace for SLR
Stationary bike, low resistance, high seat
Short arc quadriceps exercises in pain free ranges
Mini-squats, 0-45° of flexion

9-16 weeks

Weight bearing Status/Brace: Discontinue the brace, full weight bearing
ROM: Full ROM

Therapeutic Exercise:

Step-ups, begin at 2" and progress to 8"
Stationary bike, may add light resistance as tolerated by pain
4 way hip for flexion, adduction, abduction, extension
Toe raises
Hamstring curls
Treadmill walking
Continue proprioception exercises
Leg press 0-45° of flexion with light resistance
Closed kinetic chain terminal knee extension with resistive tubing or weight machine
Stairmaster for endurance at 10-12 weeks - must be pain free

*May start water running at 12 weeks

RETURN TO ACTIVITY PHASE: (4-6 months)

Progress to home exercise program:

Progression of closed chain kinetic activities
Initiate land running and progress to cutting/turning
- **must obtain the approval for running from the attending surgeon**
Functional progression, sport specific or work specific exercise as appropriate