Arthroscopic Meniscus Repair Post-Operative Rehabilitation Protocol

Phase I: 0 – 6 weeks

- Touch-down weight bearing until week five
- Passive knee ROM exercises (see figures below)
  - Extension
    - Passive extension – sit in a chair and place your heel on the edge of a stool or chair; relax thigh muscles and let the knee sag under it's own weight until maximum extension is achieved.
    - Heel props – place rolled up towel under the heel and allow leg to relax
    - Prone hangs – lie face down on a table/bed with the legs hanging off the edge of the table; allow the legs to sag into full extension.
  - Flexion - limited to 90°
    - Passive flexion – sit on chair/edge of bed and let knee bend under gravity; may use the other leg to support and control flexion
    - Wall slides – Lie on your back with the involved foot on the wall and allow the foot to slide down the wall by bending the knee; use other leg to apply pressure downward.
    - Heel slides – Use your good leg to pull the involved heel toward the buttocks, flexing the knee. Hold for 5 seconds; straighten the leg by sliding the heel downward and hold for 5 seconds.
  - Quadriceps isometric sets in full extension
  - Straight leg raises
  - Hamstring isometric sets in full extension
  - Patella mobilization
  - Hip abduction, adduction
  - Ankle ROM and gastoc-soleus strengthening with tubing/therabands

Phase II: Weeks 6 – 12

- Progress to full weight bearing
- Advance flexion as tolerated
- Stationary bicycling – begin with no resistance, with goal of 45 minutes for endurance training; then may gradually increase resistance
- Treadmill walking / elliptical trainer (slow speed, no incline) – begin with 5-10 minute duration; advance 5 minutes/week
- Standing Hamstring curls
- Standing toe raises
- Partial squats at 8 – 10 weeks (less than 90° flexion)
- At 8 weeks, add closed chain progressive resistance exercises (PRE), lateral step-ups
Phase III: Weeks 12 – 16

- Continue previous exercises with progressive resistance
- Begin running program – begin on treadmill or soft track; start with 1 minute running, 4 minute walking intervals; increase running by 1 minute/week (with decrease in walking interval) with goal of 20 minutes of continuous running after 5 weeks
- Increase plyometric exercises
- Add sport specific drills
- No deep knee squats until 4 – 6 months
- Return to normal sports/strenuous activities at 4 – 6 months when complete functional training: full, pain free ROM, normal gait, normal balance and proprioception, near-normal leg strength

EXERCISE FIGURES

Heel props

![Heel props](image1)

Prone hangs

![Prone hangs](image2)

Passive flexion
Wall slides

Heel slides
Straight leg raises

Partial squats