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Lateral / Posterolateral Corner Knee Reconstruction

November 1, 2026

This is the rehabilitation plan I ask your physical therapist to follow after your Lateral / Posterolateral Corner Knee Reconstruction. Bring it to your first therapy visit. It is a framework, not a prescription: your therapist adjusts the pace to how you are healing, and anything we discussed in the office takes precedence over what is printed here. If something on this page does not match what we talked about, ask me.

Operation Lateral / Posterolateral Corner Knee Reconstruction

Physical therapist Please send progress notes to the office and call with any question about the plan.

Days 1-14

EXERCISES

- Dressing - POD 1: Debulk dressing, TED Hose in place
  - POD 2: Change dressing, keep wound covered, continue TED Hose
  - POD 7-10: Sutures out, D/C TED Hose when effusion resolved
- Brace - Locked in extension
- Crutches - Flat foot weight bearing (FFWB)
- Patellar mobilization (teach patient)
- AAROM, AROM 0-90 degrees
- Calf pumping
- Passive extension with heel on bolster or Prone hangs
- Electrical stimulation in full extension with quad sets and SLR
- Quad sets, Co-contractions quads / Hamstrings
- Straight leg raise (SLR) x 3 on mat, in brace (parallel bars if poor quad control)
  - NO ABD
- Ice pack with knee in full extension after exercise

GOALS

- Pain / effusion control
- Good quad control

Weeks 2-4

EXERCISES

- Brace - locked in extension
- Crutches - Partial weight bearing (PWB)
- Continue appropriate previous exercises
- Scar massage when incision healed
- AAROM, AROM 0-90 degrees
- Begin Total Gym for ROM - Level 1-3
  - Passive flexion to 90 degrees (push up with opposite leg)
- Straight leg raise (SLR) x 3 on mat, no brace (no resistance) - NO ABD
- Double leg heel raises
- Stretches - Hamstring, hip flexors

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Lateral / Posterolateral Corner Knee Reconstruction (continued)

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GOALS

- ROM 0-90
- No extensor lag

Weeks 4-6

EXERCISES

- Brace - Open to available range
- Crutches - Weight bearing as tolerated (WBAT) (D/C when gait is normal)
- Continue appropriate previous exercises
- AAROM, AROM 0-110 degrees
- Standing SLR x 4 with Theraband bilaterally (no brace)
  - May begin Hip ABD with Theraband if good LE control in full extension
- Mini squats in parallel bars - No knee flexion > 45 degrees
- Leg press with light resistance 0-45 degrees
- Hamstring curls 0-45 degrees - Carpet drags or rolling stool (closed chain)
- Proprioceptive ex - Single leg standing, double leg BAPS for weight shift
- Single leg heel raises
- Stationary bike for ROM - No resistance
- Pool therapy - Exercises in sagittal plane only

GOALS

- ROM 0-110 degrees
- No effusion

Weeks 6-8

EXERCISES

- Brace - Open to full range
- Continue appropriate previous exercises
- PROM, AAROM, AROM to regain full motion
- Wall squats - No knee flexion past 45 degrees
- Forward, lateral and retro step downs
  - No knee flexion > 45 degrees (small step)
- Knee extension ex 90-30 degrees
- Hamstring curls 0-90 - Carpet drags or rolling stool (closed chain)
- Leg press 0-90 degrees with resistance as tolerated
- Hip weight machine x 4 bilaterally
- Proprioceptive ex - Progress to single leg BAPS, ball toss and body blade
- Stationary bike - Progressive resistance and endurance
- Elliptical trainer
- Treadmill - Forwards and backwards walking
- Pool therapy - Chest deep

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Lateral / Posterolateral Corner Knee Reconstruction (continued)

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GOALS

- Full ROM

Weeks 8-12

EXERCISES

- D/C brace
- Continue appropriate previous exercises with progressive resistance
- Forward, lateral and retro step downs - Medium to large step
- Hamstring curl weight machine through full range
- Knee extension weight machine through full range
- Stairmaster - Small steps
- Treadmill - Walking progression program
- Pool therapy - Unrestricted
- ITB stretch

GOALS

- Walk 2 miles at 15 min/mile pace

Months 3-4

EXERCISES

- Continue appropriate previous exercises
- Fitter
- Slide board
- Agility drills - Figure 8s, gentle loops, large zigzags
- Swimming
- Treadmill - Running progression program
- Quad stretches

GOALS

- Run 2 miles at easy pace

Months 4-6

EXERCISES

- Continue appropriate previous exercises
- Agility drills / Plyometrics
- Sit-up progression
- Progressive weight training program
- Running progression to track
- Transition to home / gym program

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GOALS

- Return to all activities
- Pass a return-to-sport / fitness test at 6 months post-op
- No contact sports until 6 months post-op

Home exercise sheet - knee phase 1

Perform exercises below frequently: 30 reps 3-5x a day

- Quad Isometrics
- Heel Slides
- Active Assisted Motion
- Ice Position 15 minutes 2-3 x per day

Abbreviations

AROM / AAROM / PROM: active / active-assisted / passive range of motion. ROM: range of motion. ER / IR: external / internal rotation. ABD / ADD: abduction / adduction (away from / toward the midline). FLEX / EXT: flexion / extension. WBAT / PWB / TTWB / NWB: weight bearing as tolerated / partial / toe-touch / non-weight bearing. SLR: straight leg raise. HS: hamstrings. ITB: iliotibial band. UE / LE: upper / lower extremity. UBE: upper body ergometer (arm bike). BAPS: balance board. BFR: blood flow restriction training. PREs: progressive resistance exercises. D/C: discontinue. prn: as needed. POD: post-operative day. TENS: transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation. ADLs: activities of daily living.

Source

Adapted from William Beaumont Army Medical Center, Physical Therapy Section, "Lat PostLat Corner WB08", Revised August 2008, published by William Beaumont Army Medical Center at https://william-beaumont.tricare.mil/Health-Services/Hospital-Care-Surgery/Post-Operative-Rehabilitation-Protocols (a work of the U.S. Government in the public domain).

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