

Medial Patellofemoral Ligament Reconstruction Rehabilitation Guidelines

Phase 1 (Week 0-2)

- Discharge home when safe with 90° knee flexion, full extension and ability to straight leg raise (usually 1 night stay in hospital).
- Control of pain and swelling (i.e. ice packs, elevation, advice re importance of analgesia).
- Improve range of movement with active knee flexion and extension.
- Strengthen quadriceps: static quadriceps contraction, straight leg raise (with no weight), inner and through range strengthening.
- Mobilise with crutches weight bearing as tolerated.
- Stitches removed at approximately 10 days.

Phase 2 (Week 2-6)

- Continue to control pain and swelling as before.
- Continue to increase range of movement. At the end of this stage aim for full range of motion of knee flexion and extension.
- Improve gait pattern. Wean the patient off crutches as pain and strength allows, they should be fully weight bearing at the end of this stage.
- Continue to progress quadriceps strengthening as pain and swelling allows, 1/4 squat, step ups etc. Avoid resisted open chain quadriceps strengthening.
- Consider scar mobilisation, patella mobilisations and desensitisation.
- Strengthening of gastrocnemius, gentle strengthening of hamstrings (avoiding weights for hamstrings until week 9).



Phase 3 (Week 6-12)

- Obtain full range of movement.
- Continue with ice packs after exercise, if necessary.
- Optimise muscle strength and endurance for quads, hamstrings and calf. Add increasing weights from week 9 both for open and closed chain exercises as pain allows.
- Static exercise bike when appropriate, regarding range of movement, pain and swelling.
- Swimming from week 6 with straight leg kick (no breast stroke).

Phase 4 (3-6 months)

- From week 12 can swim using breaststroke.
- Commence light jogging when patient has good control and no effusion.
- Maximise muscle endurance and strength of major muscle groups (no restrictions on open chain quadriceps strengthening). Progress gradually to dynamic stability and gradual sport specific training.
- Return to sports between 4-6 months when no swelling, full range of movement, muscle power of major groups 85% to contra lateral side.

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Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital. Email ruh-tr.pals@nhs.net or telephone 01225 825656.