Knee Meniscus Repair Protocol

General Guidelines:

1. Non weight bearing with crutches and a brace for 6 weeks
2. No knee flexion beyond 90 degrees for the 1st 4 weeks
3. Avoid adduction straight leg raise initially with medial meniscus repair or abduction leg raise with lateral meniscus repair
4. No hip extension or hamstring work for 6 weeks with posterior horn or root repair

Phase I: Maximum Protection Phase (Weeks 1-6):

The patient should be NWB with 2 crutches and the brace locked at 0 degrees for ambulation.

At 2 weeks post op, the brace may be drop locked up to 90 degrees for sitting

Exercises:

- Patellar mobs
- Calf stretch
- Hamstring stretch
- Ankle pumps
- Quad sets- independently and with electrical stimulation if needed
- Flexion leg raises & abduction/adduction/extension leg raises per surgical precautions
- Multi-angle quad isometrics
• Clamshells for gluts and hip abductors
• Active assisted knee flexion range of motion seated on the side of the table up to 90 degrees
• At 2 weeks, add LAQs for quad 90-30 knee flexion
• At 3 weeks may begin pool therapy in chest deep water: SLR flexion and abduction, walking forward, partial squats, heel raises, unilateral stance
• At week 3 add weight shifts

Phase II: Moderate Protection (Weeks 6-8):

Wean from crutches, discontinue the use of the brace as long as the patient exhibits good quad control.

Exercises:
• Heel slides to increase range of motion as tolerated
• Bike- start with no resistance
• Terminal knee extension with theraband resistance to start
• Initiate remaining straight leg raises (i.e. abduction/adduction/extension leg raises that were previously held)
• Minisquats 0-45 degrees
• Heel raises
• Cone walking for balance
• Progress weight used for LAQ
• Backward walking on treadmill with incline if needed to promote terminal quad control

Phase III: Minimal Protection (Weeks 8-11):

Begin more aggressive strengthening for quads and initiate hamstring strengthening

Exercises:
• Hamstring curls- begin standing or prone with cuff weight and progress to weight machines
• Bridges
• Multi-angle hip machine
• Leg press
• Leg extension machine 90-15 degrees
• Wall sits to 60 degrees
• Step ups in multiple planes
• Lateral touchdowns for eccentric control
• Theraband walking
• Smith Press squats to 60 degrees
• Minilunges
• Progress unilateral balance activities
• Elliptical machine
• Range of motion activities to progress to full range of motion

**Phase IV: Advanced Phase (Weeks 12-16)**

All strengthening activities can be progressed as tolerated with a goal of increasing strength, power and endurance. Emphasis should be placed on functional and pre-sport activities.

The patient should return to follow up with their orthopaedic surgeon for clearance to begin running and agility program.

**Criteria for return to sports:**

• Completion of running and agility program without pain
• Quad strength 85-90% / Hamstring strength 90%
• Good proprioception/balance
• Functional testing (functional hop test, forward & lateral excursion testing, lateral touchdowns) 85% of uninvolved leg