



Centers for  
Orthopaedics  
*Experience in Motion*

33 Sewall Street  
Portland, ME 04102  
(207) 828-2100

[www.orthoassociates.com](http://www.orthoassociates.com)

## POSTERIOR CRUCIATE LIGAMENT RECONSTRUCTION REHABILITATION

### General considerations:

- Patients are touch-down weight bearing with crutches for 4 weeks post-operatively.
- Patients will use a hinged neoprene brace for 8 weeks post-op. It will be locked in full extension for 4 weeks and then progressed to 0-30 at 4 weeks and 15 degrees a week until 8 weeks.
- Early emphasis on achieving full passive terminal extension equal to the opposite side.  
\*No resisted knee flexion exercises for 8 weeks post-op. Passive flexion okay.
- Regular manual care of the patella, patella tendon, and portals should be performed to prevent fibrosis.
- All times are approximate with actual progression based upon clinical presentation.

### Week 1:

- Gait training, pain and edema control, and muscle stimulation as needed for quadriceps recruitment.
- Ankle pumps, quad sets, and leg raises into flexion and abduction only.
- Well-leg stationary bike and UBE for cardiovascular. Upper body weight machines and trunk exercises.

### Weeks 2-4:

- Passive flexion and extension stretching.
- Prone hip extension exercises performed in full knee extension only after 2 weeks.
- Submaximal quad and gluteal isometrics.
- Standing calf and hip exercises.
- Balance and proprioception exercises.
- Swimming and pool workouts as soon as incisions are well-healed.

### Weeks 4-6:

- Introduce mild isometric resisted knee extension within range of motion restrictions.
- Short range squats/knee bends within range of motion restrictions.

### Weeks 6-8:

- Gradually increase the depth of knee bends, step exercises and proprioception exercises.
- Introduce hamstring curls against gravity without resistance after 7 weeks. Focus on eccentrics.
- Continue to increase the intensity and resistance of other exercises.
- Passive range of motion should be near normal

### Weeks 8-12:

- Wean off the use of the brace for activities of daily living.
- Begin hamstring flexion exercises against light resistance. Increase as tolerated.
- Cautiously add lateral training exercises (i.e. lateral stepping, lateral step ups).

### Weeks 12-16:

- Goals are to increase strength, power and cardiovascular conditioning.



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- Sport-specific exercises and training program.
- Maximal eccentric focused strengthening program.
- Begin light running program as able to demonstrate good strength and mechanics.

**4-6 months:**

- Goals are to develop maximal strength, power and advance to sporting activities.
- Resisted closed-chain rehabilitation through multiple ranges.
- Running program, balance drills and agility program.
- Initiate plyometric training as able to demonstrate adequate strength and proper mechanics.