

## Medial Patellofemoral Ligament Reconstruction Protocol

Dr. Michael Chiu, MD  
Illinois Bone and Joint Institute  
Phone: (847)870-6100  
Fax: (847)870-8159

### Post-Op Week 0-4:

Goals: Control inflammation and pain, protect soft tissue and tubercle fixation, full extension and progress to full flexion as tolerated, Achieve quadriceps control

Immobilizer: Wear the immobilizer and use crutches during all weight bearing activity. Can remove for sleep. May remove for exercises but keep on for straight leg raises.

Therapeutic Exercises: Straight leg raises in all planes (use brace locked in extension for SLRs), Heel slides to 90 degrees, calf pumps, quadriceps sets, Electrical stimulation and biofeedback to regain quad function, Patellar mobilization, Ankle ROM and resistive exercises with sports tubing (Theraband)

Criteria to progress to next phase: Good quad set, straight leg raise without extension lag, 90 degrees of knee flexion, Full extension

### Post-Op Week 4-8:

Goals: Increase ROM, Establish normal gait with unlocked brace

Brace/Weight-bearing: Continue with full weight bearing, use crutches and unlock brace for ambulation, May discontinue crutches and brace when normal gait pattern and quad control is achieved

Therapeutic Exercises: Increase ROM, Progress to SLRs without brace, Mini-squats (0-45 degrees), Stationary Bike (high seat, low tension), Closed chain extension (leg press:0-45 degrees), Pool walking/jogging, Toe raises, Hamstring and gastroc-soleus stretches, Proprioception (Mini-tramp standing, Stable and unstable platform (BAPS) with eyes open and closed, Standing ball throwing and catching)

Criteria to progress to next phase: Normal gait, Full range of motion, Sufficient strength and proprioception to initiate functional activities

### Post-Op Week 8-12:

Goals: Improve confidence in the knee, Protect the patellofemoral joint, Progress with strength, power, and proprioception

Brace: Discontinue

Therapeutic Exercise: Continue with flexibility exercises, Hamstring curls, Mini-squats and leg press to 60 degrees, StairMaster, elliptical trainer, cross-country ski machine, lap swimming, Stationary bike (increase resistance), Step-up (start 2 inches and increase to 8 inches), Continue to work on

proprioception and balance (lateral slide board, ball throwing and catching on unstable surface),  
Treadmill walking

**Post-Op 3+ Months:**

Goals: Return to unrestricted activity by 4-5 months

Therapeutic Exercises: Progress with flexibility and strengthening program, Advance with closed chain exercises, begin pool jogging and progress to running on land, Begin to incorporate cutting drills into agility training, Advance heights with plyometric conditioning, Sports specific drills (start a 25% on speed and advance as tolerated)

Criteria for Return to Sports: Full range of motion, No effusion, Quad and hamstring strength 90% of contralateral side, No patellofemoral symptoms