

Simple Meniscus Repair

General Considerations:

- It is important to recognize that all times are approximate and that progression should be based on careful monitoring of the patient's functional status.
- PROM as tolerated.
- Patients will be in a knee immobilizer for weightbearing for 3 weeks postop.
- Full weightbearing in extension until 4 weeks postop. Important to watch for lower leg rotation or heel whip with ambulation.
- Closed chain activities initiate at 3-4 weeks postop and beginning between 20-90° OR in full extension to avoid stress on the repair. Avoid submaximal CKC exercises for 6 weeks.
- Active hamstring exercises can be initiated at 4 weeks and resistive at 6 weeks.
- No lateral exercises for 6-8 weeks and no pivoting or ballistic activities for at least 4 months postop.
- No resisted leg extension machines (isotonic or isokinetic) at any point in the rehab process.
- Patients are given a Cybex/functional assessment test at 14 weeks, 6 months, and 1 year postop.

Week 1:

- Straight leg raise exercises (lying, seated, and standing), quadriceps/adduction/gluteal sets, gait training. Well-leg stationary cycling, abdominal exercises, and upper body conditioning.
- Soft tissue treatments to posterior musculature, retropatellar, and surgical incisions.

Weeks 2-4:

- Continue with pain control, gait training, and soft tissue treatments.
- Incorporate closed-chain exercises (i.e., mini-squats, modified lunges, short step-ups) between 20-70° OR in full extension. Avoiding going into the last 15-20° of extension avoids stress on the repair.
- Aerobic exercises consisting of UBE, well-leg stationary cycling, and upper body weight training.

Weeks 4-6:

- Discontinue use of knee immobilizer, if able to demonstrate adequate quad control.
- Leg weight machines (i.e., light leg press, calf raises, abduction/adduction).
- Add hamstring curls without resistance*.
- Stationary cycling initially for ROM, increasing as tolerated.
- Patients should have full extension and 110° of flexion by the end of this period.

Weeks 6-12:

- Increase the intensity of functional exercises (i.e., add a stretch cord for resistance, add weight, increasing resistance of aerobic machines).
 - Introduce resistive hamstring curls*.
- Add lateral training exercises (i.e., lateral stepping, lateral step-ups, step-overs).

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Weeks 12-16:

- Progress to running as able to demonstrate good mechanics and appropriate strength.
- Begin to incorporate sport-specific training (i.e., volleyball bumping, light soccer kicks, and ball skills on contralateral side).
- Patients should be weaned into a home program with emphasis on their particular activity.

Weeks 16-24:

- Incorporate bilateral jumping and bounding exercises, making sure to watch for compensatory patterns and any signs of increased load on the knee with take-offs or landings.

*--cautiously introduce hamstring resisted exercises, watching for signs of joint line/meniscus irritation.