



Orthopedic Surgery, Sports Medicine & Arthroscopy Specialists

Jonathan Watson, MD

REHABILITATION PROTOCOL- Nonoperative meniscus

The rehabilitation guidelines are presented in a criterion based progression program. Individual patients will progress at different rates depending on their age, associated injuries, pre-injury health status, rehab compliance, tissue quality and injury severity. Specific time frames, restrictions, and precautions may also be given to protect healing tissues and the surgical repair/reconstruction. The therapist should consult the referring physician with any questions or concerns.

INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATIONS

PHASE 1

REHAB GOALS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Minimize swelling & pain2. Normalize gait3. Maintain/restore full extension
PRECAUTIONS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Avoid high impact activities2. Ice as needed for pain
RANGE OF MOTION EXERCISES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Soft tissue mobilizations/techniques as tolerated○ Low load, long duration & towel stretches for knee extension
SUGGESTED THERAPEUTIC EXERCISES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ As above○ Heel lifts, quad sets○ Weight shifts○ Gait training
CARDIOVASCULAR EXERCISE	UBE
PROGRESSION CRITERIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Minimal/no effusion○ Full extension

PHASE 2

REHAB GOALS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Restore normal knee flexion2. Minimize pain and swelling
PRECAUTIONS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Avoid impact activities2. Ice as needed after activity
RANGE OF MOTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Continue phase 1 exercises○ Modalities as needed

EXERCISES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Heel/wall slides & towel stretches for knee flexion
SUGGESTED THERAPEUTIC EXERCISES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue phase 1 exercises ○ Cont quad sets, gait training
CARDIOVASCULAR EXERCISE	Continue phase 1 Stationary bike (high seat, low tension), elliptical, stairmaster
PROGRESSION CRITERIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Minimal/no effusion ○ Full flexion ○ No extensor lag

PHASE 3

REHAB GOALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Progress strengthening ○ Minimize pain, inflammation
PRECAUTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue phase 2 activities
RANGE OF MOTION EXERCISES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue exercises from phase 2. ○ Mobilizations/soft tissue technique as needed
SUGGESTED THERAPEUTIC EXERCISES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue exercises from phase 2 ○ Single leg press, knee extension, step downs until symmetrical strength, then progress with 2 leg activities ○ Hip & core strengthening ○ Balance/neuromuscular- 2 leg activities when 2 leg strengthening started ○ Sport specific- non impact sport/work activities can be started
CARDIOVASCULAR EXERCISE	Continue phase 2, increase time/resistance
PROGRESSION CRITERIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 90% quad strength ○ Full ROM ○ No effusion

PHASE 4

REHAB GOALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No pain with sport activities ○ Improvement of strength, endurance, neuromuscular control ○ Return to sport/work
PRECAUTIONS	Post-activity soreness should resolve within 24 hours Avoid post activity swelling

RANGE OF MOTION EXERCISES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Continue with flexibility exercises from previous phase
SUGGESTED THERAPEUTIC EXERCISES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Continue phase 3 activities. Progress with resistance/load.○ Sport specific/agility- can begin low speed jumping, planting, pivoting. Increase speed/directional component as tolerated○ Balance neuromuscular- progress to single leg, unstable surface, etc
CARDIOVASCULAR EXERCISE	Walk/run progression. Begin every other day
PROGRESSION CRITERIA- RETURN TO SPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Quad & hamstring strength >90% of contralateral○ Symmetrical ROM○ Completion of sport/work specific program○ Physician clearance