

Rehabilitation Protocol: Patellar Tendon Repair

Phase I: 0-6 weeks

- Brace: hinge knee brace, locked in extension while sleeping and at all times except when in therapy
- ROM: okay to unlock for therapy as follows:
 - > Extension weeks 0-2
 - > 0-30 deg weeks 2-3
 - > Progress ~15 deg thereafter per week
- Weightbearing: WBAT in extension
- Exercises:
 - Patellar mobilization
 - Straight leg raise supine with brace locked at 0 degrees
 - Quad sets
 - Ankle pumps

Phase II: 6-12 weeks

- Brace: unlock brace for ambulating, wean from brace as tolerated
- ROM: gradually normalize ROM, no limits, focus on maintaining full extension
- Weightbearing: full WBAT, may d/c from crutches when gait normalized
- Exercises:
 - Begin short crank ergometry and progress to standard (170mm) ergometry (if knee ROM >115 deg)
 - Advance quad strengthening (closed chain)
 - Mini squats/weight shift

Phase III: 3-6 months

- Brace: None
- ROM: full, normal ROM
- Weightbearing: WBAT
- Exercises:
 - Leg press, squats
 - Initiate jogging/running
 - Isotonic knee extensions (90-40 degrees, closed chain preferred)
 - Agility exercises (sport cord)
 - Versaclimber/Nordic track
 - Normalize quad strength
 - Modalities PRN

Phase IV: 6+ months

- Brace: None
- ROM: full, normal ROM
- Weightbearing: WBAT
- Exercises:
 - Sport-specific exercises
 - Return to sport-- MD directed
 - Modalities PRN