

Tibial Plateau Fracture: Open Reduction Internal Fixation (ORIF)

Physical Therapy Protocol

Phase I – Maximum Protection (0 to 1 Week)

0 to 1 Week

- Ice and modalities to **reduce pain and inflammation**.
- **Non-weight bearing (NWB)** with crutches for **12 weeks**.
- **Brace in full extension** except during therapy sessions.
- **Elevate the leg** above the heart for the first **3 to 5 days**.
- **Patella mobility drills**.
- **Gait training** focusing on NWB restoration.

Phase II – Progressive Stretching and Early Strengthening (Weeks 1 to 6)

Weeks 1 to 6

- Continue with the program outlined in **Phase I**.
- Use **modalities** to control inflammation.
- Begin **gentle range of motion (ROM)**, goal to exceed **90° of knee flexion by 4 weeks**.
- **Closed kinetic chain multi-plane hip strengthening** on the **uninvolved** side.
- **Proprioception drills** emphasizing **neuromuscular control**.

Phone: 513-232-2663

Fax: 513-985-2580

“Dr. Trevor” Stefanski, M.D.
Minimally Invasive Joint Specialist
DrTrevor.com/PT

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- **Multi-plane ankle strengthening.**

Phase III – Strengthening and Proprioceptive Phase (Weeks 6 to 12)

Weeks 6 to 12

- Use **modalities as needed.**
- Continue with **Phase II** exercises as indicated.
- **Emphasize achieving and maintaining full ROM.**
- Begin **stationary bike** and light **strengthening exercises.**
- **Initiate weight-bearing as tolerated**, progressing **gradually.**

Phase IV – Advanced Strengthening and Initiation of Plyometric Drills (Weeks 12 to 20)

Weeks 12 and Onward

- Begin **partial weight-bearing at 25% of body weight**, increasing by **25% per week.**
- Gradually progress to **one crutch as tolerated**, eventually **weaning off crutches.**
- Normalize **gait pattern** once bearing full weight.
- **Initiate closed kinetic chain exercises**, progressing from **bilateral to unilateral movements.**
- Begin **proprioceptive training exercises.**

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Phase V – Full Return to Activity (Weeks 20 and Beyond)

Weeks 20 and Onward

- **Full return to activity** as tolerated.
- Continue **strengthening and proprioceptive exercises**.
- Begin **sport-specific drills** and **progressive load-bearing exercises**.

Patient Education

- **Emphasize the importance of following weight-bearing guidelines** to avoid complications.
- **Instruct patients** on proper **bracing, gait training**, and managing **swelling with elevation and cryotherapy**.
- Educate on **gradual return to activity**, focusing on avoiding **high-impact activities** until cleared.

Red Flags

- **Unusual pain, increased swelling, or discomfort** should be **reported to the healthcare provider**.
- Any **difficulties with weight-bearing progression** or **abnormal gait pattern** should be **addressed immediately**.
- Persistent or **increasing joint stiffness**, particularly after **12 weeks**, should be **evaluated for potential complications**.

Final Considerations

- **Follow all precautions to ensure a smooth recovery**.

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- **Gradual strengthening and controlled movement will maximize surgical success.**
- **Reach out to your healthcare provider if you experience concerns or setbacks.**

How to Use This Guide

- **Adhere to the outlined progression phases.**
- **Monitor pain and ROM improvements.**
- **Communicate any concerns to your surgeon or therapist.**

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