

Distal Femur Fracture ORIF (with Intercondylar Split)

Physical Therapy Protocol

Initial Precautions

- **Range of Motion:** Limitation of 0–90° for the first 6 weeks. Start progressing range of motion 10 to 15 degrees per week, with a goal of full range of motion by 10 weeks.
- **Weight-Bearing Status:** Toe-touch weight-bearing until the 6-week appointment. Progress weight-bearing by approximately 25% per week after that.

Phase I: Maximum Protection (Weeks 0 to 6)

Weeks 0 to 2:

- Ice and modalities to reduce pain and inflammation.
- Range of motion: 0–90°.
- Toe-touch weight-bearing.
- Elevate the leg above the heart for the first 3 to 5 days.
- Initiate patella mobility drills.
- Gait training with crutches (NWB).

Weeks 2 to 6:

- Continue modalities to control inflammation.
- Maintain program from Week 0–2.
- Begin gentle knee ROM exercises, goal of >90° flexion by Week 4.
- Progress multi-plane hip strengthening on the uninvolved side.
- Emphasize neuromuscular control and proprioception drills.

Phase II: Progressive Stretching and Early Strengthening (Weeks 6 to 12)

- Continue with modalities as needed.
- Continue exercises from Phase I.
- Emphasis on achieving and maintaining full ROM.
- Stationary bike with resistance.
- Begin multi-plane quadriceps strengthening.
- Progress weight-bearing as tolerated. Gradual transition to full weight-bearing.

- Initiate light resistance training for the hip and knee.

Phase III: Strengthening and Proprioception (Weeks 12 to 16)

- Continue progressing resistance exercises.
- Begin functional exercises, including step-ups and lunges.
- Increase intensity of quadriceps and hamstring strengthening.
- Emphasis on proprioception and balance exercises.
- Start light cardiovascular exercises such as cycling and low-impact aerobics.

Phase IV: Return to Activity (Weeks 16+)

- Gradual return to functional activities with no impact.
- Progress strength and endurance.
- Include dynamic stabilization and core strengthening.
- Consider resuming activities of daily living.