

Meniscus Repair

Physical Therapy Protocol

Phase I – Maximum Protection (Weeks 0–6)

Precautions:

- **Non-weight bearing (NWB)** with crutches for the first 6 weeks.
- **No deep squats or cross-legged sitting for 4 months.**
- **Brace setting:** 0° locked in extension.
- **Passive range of motion (PROM):** 0–90° only for first 4 weeks.

Goals:

- Protect surgical repair
- Control inflammation and pain
- Initiate quad activation and gentle ROM

Exercises:

- Flexion/Extension – wall slides
- Flexion/Extension – seated
- Patella and tendon mobilization
- Extension mobilization
- Quad sets
- Sit and reach for hamstrings (towel)
- Ankle pumps

Cardiovascular:

- Bike or rowing with well leg only

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Phase II – Protected Motion (Weeks 6–10)

Precautions:

- Continue to avoid loaded knee flexion or deep squats.
- Gradual reintroduction of active hamstring use.

Goals:

- Improve range of motion
- Begin muscle activation (hamstrings and calves)
- Initiate cardiovascular and proprioception training

Exercises:

- Begin hamstring sets
- Toe and heel raises
- Balance series
- Continue quad sets, patella mobilization, wall slides
- Continue sit and reach stretch

Cardiovascular:

- Bike with both legs (start with no resistance, progress to light resistance)
- Aquajogging
- Treadmill walking (incline up to 7%)
- Swimming with fins (if wounds healed)

Phase III – Early Strengthening (Weeks 10–16)

Goals:

- Normalize gait mechanics

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Innovating **BIG RESULTS**
Through Small Incisions

- Begin functional strength progression
- Improve neuromuscular control

Exercises:

- Double knee bends
- Double leg bridges
- Static reverse lunges
- Beginning cord resistance exercises
- Single-leg deadlifts (as tolerated)

Cardiovascular:

- Elliptical trainer
- Rowing
- Stair stepper
- Continue treadmill walking and swimming

Phase IV – Strength & Control (Weeks 16–20)

Goals:

- Improve strength and coordination
- Advance to unilateral strength and balance

Exercises:

- Balance squats
- Leg press
- Advance proprioceptive balance series
- Continue progression of previous exercises

Cardiovascular:

- Increase endurance on elliptical, stair stepper, and treadmill

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Phase V – Agility & Return to Activity (Weeks 20–24+)

Goals:

- Prepare for return to sport and high-level activities
- Restore full confidence in limb function

Agility Drills:

- Running progression
 - Begin with single-plane running
 - Advance to multidirectional agility
- Functional sports testing

High-Level Activities (As tolerated):

- Golf
- Outdoor biking, hiking, snowshoeing
- Skiing, basketball, tennis, football, soccer (clearance required)

Timeline Overview (Post-Op Day Reference)

- **Week 1 (POD 1–7):** NWB, brace locked at 0°, begin passive motion and quad sets
- **Week 2 (POD 8–14):** Progress ROM and maintain precautions
- **Week 3–4:** Add seated flexion/extension, introduce gentle functional tasks within limits