

Non-Operative Patella Fracture

Physical Therapy Protocol

Phase 1: Weeks 0–4

Range of Motion (ROM):

- Hinged knee brace locked at 0 degrees
- Intermittent active and active-assisted flexion with passive extension for 5–10 minutes, 4 times daily
- Patellar mobilization activity
- Remain within 0–45 degrees of ROM

Strengthening:

- Isometric hamstrings using an endurance protocol: 10–40 repetitions per set, 5 sets per day

Weight Bearing:

- 100% weight bearing with brace locked in full extension

Modalities:

- EMG biofeedback to hamstrings (not quadriceps), as needed
- Electrical muscle stimulation (EMS) to hamstrings, as needed
- Cryotherapy

Sports:

- None

Phase 2: Weeks 4–6

Range of Motion (ROM):

- Advance ROM as tolerated
- Brace locked in full extension when ambulating only

Strengthening:

- Initiate quadriceps strengthening and straight leg raises (SLR)

Weight Bearing:

- Continue 100% weight bearing with brace locked in full extension

Modalities:

- As needed (per Phase 1)

Sports:

- None

Phase 3: Weeks 6–8

(No details provided; assumed progression of Phase 2 if applicable)

Phase 4: Weeks 8–12 (and beyond if applicable)

Range of Motion (ROM) and Brace Use:

- If not already weaned off brace, continue ROM and strengthening to facilitate brace discontinuation
- ROM and strengthening as tolerated

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Modalities:

- As needed

Sports:

- Progress through a graduated running program (e.g., functional rehabilitation program)
- Resume primary sports if:
 - Near full ROM is achieved
 - At least 80% quadriceps and hamstring strength compared to contralateral limb

Return to Sport:

- Typically 3–4 months post-injury
- May include progression through a work conditioning program, if applicable