

# Quadriceps Tendon Repair

## Physical Therapy Protocol

Phase I – Protective Phase (Weeks 0–3)

Goals:

- Protect surgical repair
- Minimize pain and inflammation
- Prevent stiffness and quadriceps atrophy
- Begin gentle patellar and soft tissue mobility

Precautions / Restrictions:

- **Weight Bearing:** WBAT with brace locked in full extension (0–0°)
- **Brace:** Locked in full extension (0–0°) at all times
- **ROM:** No active flexion; passive extension only

Therapeutic Exercises:

- Patellar/tendon mobilization
- Extension mobilization
- Ankle pumps
- Quadriceps sets
- Hamstring sets
- Seated hamstring stretch with towel

Cardiovascular:

- Bike or rower (well leg only)

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### Phase II – Controlled Motion Phase (Weeks 4–6)

#### Goals:

- Restore gradual ROM (active flexion to 60°)
- Maintain quadriceps and hamstring activation
- Begin neuromuscular control in safe positions

#### Precautions / Restrictions:

- **Weight Bearing:** WBAT with brace locked in full extension (0–0°)
- **Brace Settings:** Continue locked at 0–0°
- **ROM:** Week 4: Active flexion 0–60°; advance flexion by 10° per week

#### Therapeutic Exercises:

- Seated flexion and wall slides (0–60°)
- Continue quad/hamstring sets
- Continue ankle pumps
- Sit-and-reach hamstring stretch
- Core and hip strengthening (without abduction/adduction)

#### Cardiovascular:

- Continue well-leg biking or rowing

### Phase III – Progressive Strengthening Phase (Weeks 7–12)

#### Goals:

- Normalize gait and weight bearing
- Improve lower limb strength and control
- Restore ROM to near full range

#### Precautions / Restrictions:

- **Brace Settings:** Week 7: Unlock to 0–60°; advance 10° per week (e.g., 0–70°, 0–80°, etc.)
- **ROM Goal:** Full flexion by end of phase

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### Therapeutic Exercises:

- Continue wall and seated flexion/extension (matching ROM limits)
- Initiate toe and heel raises
- Begin balance series (within ROM limits)
- Start weight-bearing strengthening:
  - Double leg bridges
  - Double knee bends
  - Static lunges
  - Beginning cord resistance

### Cardiovascular:

- Stationary bike (both legs – start no resistance, then progress)
- Treadmill walking (7% incline)
- Aquajogging and swimming (if incisions healed)

### Phase IV – Advanced Strengthening & Agility (Weeks 12–20)

#### Goals:

- Develop dynamic strength, balance, and endurance
- Initiate sport-specific preparation
- Normalize single-leg control

#### Therapeutic Exercises:

- Leg press
- Balance squats
- Single leg deadlifts
- Advanced cord drills
- Agility progression:
  - Running progression
  - Single-plane agility
  - Multi-directional drills

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### Cardiovascular:

- Elliptical trainer
- Rowing
- Stair stepper

### Phase V – Return to Sport & High-Level Function (Weeks 20–24+)

#### Goals:

- Return to full, pain-free activity and sport
- Reintroduce high-level and impact-based movements

#### Therapeutic Exercises:

- Functional sports testing
- Plyometric progressions (as appropriate)
- Continued agility work

#### High-Level Activities:

- Golf, outdoor biking, hiking, snowshoeing
- Return to higher-demand sports (basketball, tennis, soccer, skiing) with clearance

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