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Meniscus Root Repair Postop Protocol

Phase I: Protection Phase (Weeks 0–6)

Goals

- Protect repair
- Control swelling and pain
- Maintain full knee extension
- Activate quadriceps

Weight Bearing

- **Non-weight bearing (NWB)** or **toe-touch WB** with crutches
(possible partial WB after week 4 as per Dr. Levin)

Brace

- Hinged knee brace **locked in full extension** for ambulation
- May unlock for controlled ROM exercises

Range of Motion

- **Weeks 0–4:** 0–90°
- **Weeks 4–6:** Progress gradually, **do NOT exceed 120°**
- **No deep squatting or kneeling**

Exercises

- Quad sets
- Straight leg raises (brace locked)
- Heel slides (within ROM limits)
- Hip abduction/adduction (non-weight bearing)
- Ankle pumps
- Patellar mobilizations

Restrictions

- ✗ No active hamstring curls
 - ✗ No loaded knee flexion
 - ✗ No pivoting or twisting
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Phase II: Early Strengthening (Weeks 6–12)

Goals

- Restore normal gait
- Gradually increase ROM
- Begin closed-chain strengthening

Weight Bearing

- Progress to **full weight bearing** as tolerated
- Discontinue crutches once gait is normal

Brace

- Discontinue once adequate quad control is demonstrated

Range of Motion

- Gradual progression to **full ROM**
- Avoid flexion beyond **120–130°** until week 12

Exercises

- Mini squats ($\leq 70^\circ$)
 - Leg press (light resistance, $\leq 70^\circ$ flexion)
 - Step-ups (forward only)
 - Stationary bike (upright seat)
 - Core and hip strengthening
 - Balance/proprioception (double \rightarrow single leg)
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Phase III: Advanced Strengthening (Weeks 12–20)

Goals

- Improve strength and neuromuscular control

- Prepare for functional activities

Exercises

- Progress squat depth cautiously
- Lunges (forward only initially)
- Single-leg leg press
- Lateral step-downs
- Elliptical, swimming
- Advanced balance training

Still Avoid

- ✗ Deep squats ($>90-100^\circ$) under load
 - ✗ Twisting/pivoting movements
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Phase IV: Return to Impact & Sport (Months 5–7)

Criteria to Enter

- Full ROM
- No effusion
- Quadriceps strength $\geq 85-90\%$ of contralateral side
- Good movement mechanics

Activities

- Begin **jogging progression**
- Plyometrics (linear \rightarrow multi-directional)
- Sport-specific drills (non-contact \rightarrow contact)

Return to Sport

- Typically **6–7 months**