

**Dr. Ernat's Quadriceps or Patellar Tendon Repair
Post-Operative Protocol**

May attend up to 1-3 times weekly for 12-16 weeks.

Timing of each phase varies based on the size of the tear, quality of tissue, length of time immobilized, strength/ROM status, and expected performance/activity demands.

PHYSICAL THERAPY (PT): Typically will start 2-6 weeks after surgery depending on the extent of your injury.

RESTRICTIONS: No FWB/FROM initially.

WB / CRUTCHES: TDWB first week with crutches and brace. PWB wks 1-4 then increase by 25% each week as tolerated to wean off crutches by week 6. FWB in brace 6-8 weeks.

BRACE: Wear 6 weeks, even for sleep. Then wean wks 6-8 and brace can be used for ambulation otherwise not mandatory.

RANGE OF MOTION: Flexion 0-30 degrees for first 2 weeks, increase 10-15 degrees a week. Goal 0-60 by week 4/5, 0-90 by wks 6. Full ROM as tolerated by weeks 8-10.

STRENGTHENING: Begin quad sets and SLR post-op week 1. Light resistance progress wks 6-8.

MODALITIES: Per PT or ATC's discretion. Ice use 3-5 x/day first 10-14 days then 2-3 x/day wks 1-4 as needed.

RETURN TO ACTIVITY: subject to change, based on individual progress

Recumbent bike: 6 weeks

Elliptical: 10 weeks

Planks: 10 weeks

Road bike outside: 10-12 weeks

Golf (chip/putt): 3 months

Swimming: 3-4 months

Light jogging: 3-4 months

Golf (full swing): 4 months

Running: 4-6 months

Tennis: 6 months

Skiing: 6 months

Soccer: 6 months

Basketball: 6 months

Contact sports: 6 months

PHASE I – PROTECTION/RANGE OF MOTION (POST-OP WKS: 0-6)

(POST-OP WKS: 1)

- Ice and elevation to decrease pain and swelling.
- TDWB with crutches and knee brace – brace locked in extension for sleep. Brace for minimum 6 weeks total

- When awake and alert may loosen brace for quad sets. SLR in knee immobilizer.
- See ROM progression as above.
- **No flexion for 10 days.**

(POST-OP WKS: 1-4)

- Continue ice, elevation, quad sets, SLR in brace.
- PWB 50% wks 1-4, increase by 25% each wk as tolerated to wean off crutches.
- See ROM progression as above.
- **At 10 days start 0-30 flexion. increasing 10-15 degrees a week.**

(POST-OP WKS: 4-6)

- 1) Progress to full-weight bearing in brace.
- 2) Patella and patella tendon mobility exercises, quad sets, SLR, ankle pumps.
- 3) **At 6 weeks may increase mobility to 0°-90°.**
- 4) Initiate pool program.

PHASE II – ROM/LIGHT RESISTANCE *(POST-OP WKS: 6-12)*

(POST-OP WKS: 6-8)

- Continue with swelling control and patella mobility, quad sets and SLR.
- FWB in brace but may wean for ambulation, progress to full ROM as tolerated.
- Begin multi-plane straight leg raises and closed chain strengthening program.
- Gait Training; Begin stationary bike when motion allows.

(POST-OP WKS: 8-12)

- Continue working on ROM; 0°-120° by week 10.
- Short arc quad sets and single leg closed chain quad strengthening.
- Begin walking program as tolerated.
- Weeks 10-12 begin proprioceptive drills and may begin elliptical.

PHASE III – STRENGTHENING *(POST-OP WKS: 12-16)*

- Continue with strengthening and increase intensity of proprioception drills.
- Begin gym strengthening, **avoid** lunges and knee extensions.

PHASE IV – FUNCTIONAL PROGRESSION *(POST-OP WKS: 16-20)*

- Begin running progression and continue with strengthening.

PHASE V – RETURN TO ACTIVITY/SPORT *(POST-OP WKS: 20-24+)*

- Advanced strengthening and functional drills.
- Return to sport when cleared by your physician.

KEY FOR PATIENTS:

POST-OP = after your surgery

WB = weight-bearing

ROM = range of motion

PROM = passive range of motion, someone else moves you

AAROM = active assisted range of motion

AROM = active range of motion, you move yourself

RROM = resisted range of motion, motion against resistance, strengthening

SLR = straight leg raise

WNL = within normal limits