

Post-operative Meniscus Repair Protocol

First 7-10 days

No brace.

Use crutches for partial weight bearing only for 2-4 weeks as defined by Dr. Elkousy.

Change dressing on the second day after surgery and replace it with dry dressing.

Perform calf pumps, straight leg raises, heel slides, and quadriceps sets at least three times each day (10-20 repetitions each time).

Use ice pack/cryocuff 3 times each day for 15 minutes each time.

Keep wound/dressings dry. No showers for seven days and no baths for 3 weeks or until wounds are healed fully. You may use saran wrap or other plastic bag (garbage bag) to keep wound dry if you want to shower sooner.

Pain medication and an antibiotic will be prescribed.

Avoid anti-inflammatories for the first six weeks after surgery.

First week to one month

At first clinic visit:

- May bear weight with crutches for balance and support up to 4 weeks.
- Sutures/staples will be removed. No baths or pools for 3 weeks after surgery or until wounds are fully healed.
- Steri-strips will fall off on their own. If not, pull them off gradually one week after they are placed.

PT goals (Range of motion):

- Full symmetric extension by 2 weeks. Notify my office if not achieved.
- 90 degrees of flexion by 4-6 weeks.
- Swelling control.

Exercises:

- Quadriceps sets
- Straight leg raises
- Patellar mobilization
- Supine knee flexion/extension
- Heel slides to 90
- Sitting knee flexion to 90

4 weeks to 12 weeks

4-8 week clinic visit:

Should have discontinued use of crutches and achieved 90 degrees of flexion.

PT goals (Improve ROM, advance strengthening):

- Obtain full knee flexion by 8-10 weeks
- Quadriceps strengthening
- Hamstring strengthening
- Calf strengthening

Exercises:

- Wall slides and mini-squats to 45 degrees (closed chain 0-45)
- Open chain extension quads 90 to 60 degrees only with low weights.
- Hamstring curls with low weights 0-90. Progress gradually to higher weights by 12 weeks
- Toes raises, step ups
- May ride exercise bike, Nordic track, elliptical trainer, stairmaster with low resistance.
- Swimming (crawl stroke, backstroke only; avoid heavy kicking strokes)

3 to 6 months

PT goals:

Continue all previous exercises to progress to full strength of quadriceps and hamstrings.

Exercises:

- May start jogging at 4 months
- Full squats, leg presses at low weights and progress to full weight by 5-6 months. All weight training should be slow, controlled. No ballistic motion.
- Start to initiate cutting maneuvers at 4-6 months.

Goals:

Return to sport if full range of motion, strength is 90% of other leg
Brace not required.

Additional instructions:

If the right leg is the operative leg, you may not drive automatic transmission vehicle for 2-4 weeks.
If the left leg is the operative leg, you may drive automatic transmission vehicle after having stopped using narcotic pain medication.
May return to sedentary desk work in one week.
May return to work requiring standing gradually over 3-4 weeks.
May return to heavy labor in 6-8 months.

Duration and frequency of PT:

For week 1-8 (14 visits): supervised 2x/week. Perform exercises on your own 5-7 days/week
For week 8-12 (4 visits): supervised 1x/week. Perform exercises on your own 3-5 days/week
For weeks 12-24 (3 visits): supervised 1x/month. Perform exercises on your own 3-5 days/week