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Cartilage Procedures of the Knee – Femoral Condyles (ACI, chondral allograft) Rehabilitation Guidelines

Additional weight bearing restrictions or activity guidelines may be given based on the lesion size and location. The goals of each phase must be met prior to advancing the patient. The time frames are provided only as a guide. *If at any time during the rehab process locking or sharp pain occurs, please contact Dr. Patel's office.*

Acute/Immediate Post-Operative Phase 0-6 weeks

Goals

- Minimal pain and swelling
- Restore full PROM to knee extension
- Increase knee flexion gently
 - 0-90 degrees by end of POW 2
 - 120 degrees by POW 6
- Good quadriceps activity

Guidelines

- WB status: NWB x 6 weeks
- ROM: CPM 6-8 hours/day 0-as tol degrees through POW 3
 - Increase CPM by 5-10 degrees/day 0-90 degrees
- Exercises: Quadriceps setting (multi-angle), SLRs – flexion, abduction, extension and adduction, patellar mobility, calf and hamstring stretching (seated only), ankle pumps with/without band, active knee ext 0-30 and 90-130 degrees (avoid repetition through repair zone 45-90), stationary bike once ROM allows

Moderate Protection Phase ~6-12 weeks

Goals

- Full knee ROM
- HS strength within 20% of contralateral; quad strength within 30% of contralateral
- Balance testing within 30% of contralateral
- Bike x30 minutes or walk x1-2 miles without pain/swelling

Guidelines

- WB status: WBAT with discontinuation of crutches by POW 7-8
- ROM: As tolerated
- Exercises: weight shifting for gait, mini-squats (<45 degrees) by week 8, leg press (0-45 degrees), heel raises, progress knee ext (40-90 degrees) strengthening by 1 lb/week, balance and proprioception work, front and lateral step-ups (start small), pool exercise if interested/available

Minimal Protection Phase (Progressive Strengthening) ~12-26 weeks

GOALS:

- Full knee flexion and extension ROM (non-painful)
- Strength within 80% of contralateral leg
- Balance within 75% of contralateral leg

- Rehabilitation causes no or minimal pain and swelling

Guidelines

- ROM: as tolerated
- Exercises: Continue quad strengthening, ROM and stretching, leg press (0-90 degrees), squats to 60 degrees, progress step up height, lunges, knee ext (0-90 degrees), elliptical, improve overall gait, add quad stretching

Functional Activity Phase ~26-52 weeks

Goals

- Return to unrestricted functional activities (as permitted by Dr. Patel)

Guidelines

- Exercises: biking, progress proprioception activities as tolerated, agility activities, progress sports activities as permitted (lower impact --> higher impact)