Jennifer Thomson, MD
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY | SPORTS MEDICINE

Rehabilitation Protocol:
Patellar Tendon Debridement with Repair

Phase I, Immediate Postoperative Phase
0-2 weeks

- Brace: hinge knee brace, locked in extension while sleeping and at all times except when in therapy
- ROM: okay to unlock for therapy for ROM up to 90 deg
- Weightbearing: WBAT in extension
- Exercises:
  - Patellar mobilization
  - Straight leg raise supine with brace locked at 0 degrees
  - Quad sets
  - Ankle pumps

Phase II, Early Rehabilitation Phase
2-4 weeks

- Brace: locked in extension for ambulation and sleeping
- ROM: gradually normalize ROM, no limits, focus on maintaining full extension
- Weightbearing: WBAT in extension
- Exercises:
  - Muscle stim to quads
  - Isometric quad sets
  - Straight leg raises (4 planes)
  - Leg press (0-60 deg)
  - Knee extension (90-40 deg)
  - Partial squats (0-40 deg)
  - Weight shifts
  - Hamstring curls standing (active ROM)
  - Light bicycle if ROM allows
  - Proprioception training
  - Overpressure into extension
  - Passive ROM 0-100 deg
  - Patellar mobilization

Phase III, Progressive Strengthening and Neuromuscular Control Phase:
4-10 weeks

- Brace: unlock then wean out
- ROM: 0-125 deg
- Weightbearing: WBAT
- Exercises:
  - Bicycle
  - Hip exercises
  - Lateral step ups
  - Front step downs
  - Wall squats partial
  - Stair stepper
  - Pool program
  - Tilt board partial squats
  - After week 8- leg press 0-100 deg

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Phase IV, Advanced Activity Phase: 10-14 weeks

- Brace: None
- ROM: full, normal ROM
- Weightbearing: WBAT
- Exercises:

Leg press
Wall squats
Knee extension 90-40 deg
Step down
Calf training
Lateral step ups and lunges
Jogging after 12 weeks

Phase V, Return to Activity Phase: 14-22 months

- Brace: None
- ROM: full, normal ROM
- Weightbearing: WBAT
- Exercises:
    - Continue strengthening
    - Continue neuromuscular control drills
    - Continue plyometrics drills
    - Progress running and agility program
    - Progress sport specific training
- Running/cutting/agility drills
- Gradual return to sport drills

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