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Meniscus Repair Postop Protocol

Phase 1: Immediate Postoperative (0–2 weeks)

Goals: Protect repair, control swelling, maintain quadriceps activation.

- **Weight Bearing:**
  - **Protected partial weight bearing (PWB)** with crutches (≈ 20–50% body weight)
- **Knee Brace:** Hinged brace locked at 0–90° (0° during ambulation).
- **ROM:**
  - Passive ROM 0–90° in first 2 weeks (avoid hyperflexion >90°).
  - Full extension immediately encouraged.
- **Exercises:**
  - Quadriceps sets, straight leg raises in brace, ankle pumps.
  - Patellar mobilization (superior/inferior).
- **Precautions:** No loaded knee flexion >90°, avoid pivot/twist.

Phase 2: Early Rehabilitation (2–6 weeks)

Goals: Gradual ROM restoration, progressive loading, maintain repair protection.

- **Weight Bearing:** Progress to WBAT beginning after week 4
- **Brace:** locked in extension while Weight bearing until after week 4.
  - After week 4, keep unlocked 0-90 all the time
- **ROM:**
  - Increase flexion gradually:
    - Week 3–4: 0–90
    - Avoid deep squats and twisting motions.
- **Exercises:**
  - Closed chain strengthening (mini-squats ≤45° flexion).
  - Stationary bike (no resistance initially).
  - Hip/core strengthening.
- **Precautions:** No running, jumping, or pivot sports.

Phase 3: Intermediate Rehabilitation (6–12 weeks)

Goals: Normalize gait, increase strength/endurance, prepare for sport-specific loading.

- **Weight Bearing:** Full without crutches.
- **Brace:** Discontinue if good quad control.
- **ROM:** Full, pain-free ROM by week 8–10.
- **Exercises:**
  - Progressive resistance training (leg press ≤60° flexion).
  - Step-ups, lateral walks with band resistance.
  - Balance and proprioception training.
  - Low-impact cardio: elliptical, swimming.

Phase 4: Advanced Strengthening (3–5 months)

Goals: Restore full function, dynamic stability, and sport readiness.

- **Exercises:**
  - Plyometric drills (start with double-leg, progress to single-leg).
  - Agility ladder, shuttle runs (straight-line only initially).
  - Sport-specific drills without pivot until 4.5–5 months.
- **Criteria to Progress:**
  - Quadriceps and hamstring strength ≥90% of contralateral limb.
  - Hop tests ≥90% symmetry.

Phase 5: Return to Sport (5–6+ months)

Goals: Safe return to unrestricted activity with minimal re-tear risk.

- **Criteria for Return:**
  - Full, pain-free ROM.
  - No effusion.
  - Strength and functional testing ≥90% symmetry.
  - Surgeon clearance.