

ACL Reconstruction Protocol

	Weight Bearing	Range of Motion	Brace	Therapeutic Exercise
Phase 1 0-4 weeks	As tolerated with crutches*	As tolerated, focus on full extension	Locked in extension except for exercises. May unlock when sleeping after full extension reached	Heel slides, quad sets, calf pumps, Achilles/hamstring stretch. Straight leg raises in brace until no extension lag. 25 each twice daily.
Phase 2 4-6 weeks	Gradually discontinue crutch use	Maintain full extension and work on flexion	Discontinue use when no extension lag	Progress to weight bearing, continue above, closed chain extensions, balance exercises, hamstring curls, stationary bike
Phase 3 6 weeks to 4 months	Full, without use of crutches when gait pattern normalized	Progress to full and pain-free ROM	None	Advance closed chain strengthening, progress proprioception activities. Begin stairmaster/elliptical and straight running at 12 weeks
Phase 4 4-6 months	Full	Full and Pain Free	None	Progress to normal sport specific activities: forward/backward running, cutting, agility, shuttles

* = Modified with meniscus/articular cartilage procedures

Brace may often be removed for sleeping after first post op visit if full extension is reached

Exercises in Phase 1 to be completed in non-weight bearing position