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ARTHROSCOPIC MENISCAL REPAIR REHAB PROTOCOL

Last modified: Oct 2012

Introduction

- **Goal:** maximize strength and flexibility of the knee while protecting the repaired meniscus.

Phase I (0 to 3 weeks)

- Precautions
 - Brace can be removed during physical therapy and home ROM exercises.
- Goal: Independent ambulation, edema control, early ROM, allow healing
- Modalities to control swelling
- Electrical stimulation for quadriceps lag (15-20 minutes/treatment)
- Exercises
 - Stretches (HS, gastrocnemius/soleus, ITB, hip flexor)
 - AROM – heel slides, ankle pumps, etc.
 - PROM – heel props (5-15 minutes throughout day)
 - SLR 4-way
 - Isometric knee flexion, extension.

Phase II (4 to 6 weeks)

- Precautions
 - Initiate WB program ONLY with knee brace locked in full extension for weeks 5 & 6, then WB in unlocked brace for weeks 7 & 8. Brace is DC'd starting week 9.
- Goal: Maximize ROM, swelling minimal to none, basic strength
- Exercise
 - Begin limited open chain exercises: short arc quads and hamstring strengthening

Phase III (7 to 12 weeks)

- Precautions:
 - WBAT with knee brace adjusted to allow 0 - 90 degrees.

- Goal: Full AROM, gait normalization, advanced strength
- Exercise:
 - Open chain exercises from 0 – 90 degrees. Leg extensions and hamstring curls.
 - Begin closed chain exercise, begin squats at 0-30 degrees and progressively increase to maximum of 90 degrees. Total Gym squats and leg presses.
 - Continue to maximize ROM with AROM exercises.
 - Basic aerobic conditioning (stationary bicycling, treadmill, stair climber, swimming, etc.)

Phase IV (12+ weeks)

- Goal: Maximize strength and ROM.
- Discontinue brace use for patient.
- Proprioceptive exercises:
 - BAPS
 - Fitter Board
 - Retro walking/Lateral walking on treadmill
 - 4 way SLR with tubing
- Follow ups can be monthly.

Discharge Criteria

- Biodex at 6 months. Goal of 85% involved vs. uninvolved.
- Normal gait.

After Discharge

- Patient should continue regular program consisting of:
 - Aerobic activity (3x/week)
 - Patient's choice of walk, jog, bike, swim, etc.
 - Gym based activity (2x/week)
 - Leg Press
 - Knee Extension
 - Hamstring Curls
 - Seated/Standing calf raises
 - Lunges
 - Mini barbell squat
 - Lunges with dumbbells (multidirectional)
- Return to sport once conditioned.



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