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A member of HealthTexas Provider Network

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MCL Sprain

NON-OPERATIVE REHABILITATION PROTOCOL

PHASE	RANGE OF MOTION	BRACE / WEIGHT BEARING	THERAPEUTIC EXERCISE
Phase I **0–1 week** GOAL TO ADVANCE *Pain and swelling controlled; flexion 0-110°*	Motion as tolerated; bike for motion	Hinged knee brace*; weight bearing as tolerated with crutches until walking without a limp	Quad sets with e-stim, straight-leg raises, hamstring stretch, hip abduction/adduction; ice, compression, elevation. Avoid side-to-side stress on the knee
Phase II **1–3 weeks** GOAL TO ADVANCE *Full pain-free motion; no instability*	Full	Brace for activity; discontinue crutches	Leg press, mini-squats, lunges, step-ups, bike, pool exercise, balance drills. Begin straight-line jogging once motion is full and pain-free
Phase III **3–6 weeks** GOAL TO ADVANCE *No tenderness or swelling; strength ≥85%*	Full	Brace for sport	Strength and power, side lunges, hip adduction, agility and sport-specific drills
Phase IV **Return to sport** GOAL TO ADVANCE *Full motion; no instability or tenderness; strength ≥85-90%*	Full without discomfort	Brace for contact sport for the rest of the season	Return to sport** and maintenance strengthening

NOTES

*Typical brace time and return to sport: Grade I 1-2 weeks; Grade II 3-4 weeks; Grade III 6-8 weeks

**If approved by physician. Phases advance by meeting goals, not the calendar