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Patellar Tendon Reconstruction

REHABILITATION PROTOCOL

PHASE	RANGE OF MOTION	BRACE / WEIGHT BEARING	THERAPEUTIC EXERCISE
Phase I **0–4 weeks** GOAL TO ADVANCE *Full passive extension; quad activation*	Passive flexion 0-20° for 2 weeks, then to 70° by 4 weeks. NO active knee straightening*	Weight bearing as tolerated with brace locked straight at all times; crutches	Ankle pumps, quad sets, straight-leg raises in brace, hip strengthening, calf raises, bridges on ball
Phase II **4–8 weeks** GOAL TO ADVANCE *Flexion 100-110°; walking in brace*	Passive flexion 0-100° by 6 weeks, 0-110° by 8 weeks	Unlock brace for walking at 4-6 weeks with good quad control; discontinue by 8 weeks	Kneecap glides, single-leg balance, partial squats, mini step-ups, bike (no resistance) once flexion allows
Phase III **8–16 weeks** GOAL TO ADVANCE *Normal gait and stairs; full squat pain-free*	Progress to 90% of normal, then full	Full	Lateral step-ups, closed-chain strengthening, stair machine, pool; strength and eccentric program from 12 weeks
Phase IV **4–6 months** GOAL TO ADVANCE *Quad strength ≥80-90%*	Full	Full	Pre-running program at 3-4 months, full running at 4-6 months; plyometrics once strength allows
Phase V **6–12 months** GOAL TO ADVANCE *Return-to-sport testing passed*	Full without discomfort	—	Agility, cutting and sport-specific training; return to sport at about 9-12 months**

NOTES

*A reconstructed tendon heals more slowly than a repair; bending is gained gradually to avoid stretching the graft

**If approved by physician