

Rehabilitation Goals of Phase I ACL Reconstruction (weeks 0-6)

- Reduce pain and swelling
- Achieve and maintain full knee range of motion (straightening and bending)
- Build quadriceps strength
- Re-establish neuromuscular control
- Ice/elevate the leg 3-5x/day

These exercises are meant for ACL reconstruction using a bone-patella-bone auto graft. If your surgeon has told you that you had any other type of ACL reconstruction (hamstring auto graft, allograft, etc.), please discuss which exercises would be appropriate with him or her

Post-Operative Red Flags

Signs of Infection

Erythema (severe redness/swelling)

Fever

Discolored Drainage

Foul Odor



Signs of DVT

Calf Pain

Swollen/Red lower extremity

Chest pain (PE)

Shortness of Breath (PE)



If you suspect that you have an infection or DVT, please call your doctor immediately

Knee Range of Motion – Flexion (Bending)

- Perform each exercise 3-5x/day
- Attempt 10-20x for 2-3 sets
- You may feel some discomfort in the knee, especially if your knee is stiff when beginning this exercise. The knee should feel less stiff/painful as you continue to perform the exercise



HEEL SLIDE:

Lying on your back with knees straight, slide the affected heel towards your buttock as you bend your knee.

Hold a gentle stretch in this position and then return to original position.



SEATED KNEE FLEXION:

While seated in a chair, use your unaffected leg to bend your affected knee until a stretch is felt.

Knee Range of Motion - Extension (Straightening)

- Perform each exercise 3-5x/day
- Attempt 5-10 second holds for 5-10 repetitions
- You should feel a stretch/pull behind your knee and in the back of the thigh (below and above the knee)



CALF STRETCH:

While in a seated position, hook a towel under your foot and pull your ankle back until a stretch is felt on your calf area.



As you begin to stand more, progress to



HAMSTRING STRETCH:

While seated, rest your heel on the floor with your knee straight and gently lean forward until a stretch is felt behind your knee/thigh.

Knee Range of Motion – Straightening at Terminal Knee Extension

- Low load, long duration stretches (hold for 3-10', 3-5/day)
- Prone hang (lying on your stomach)
- You should feel a moderate stretch in the back of your knee with only mild discomfort; If the pain is more than a 4/10, attempt with no weight on the knee and perform for only a short period of time (1-2')



Quadriceps Strength

- Perform 3-5x/day
- Perform 3 sets of 10-20
- You should feel a tightening in the muscle above your knee



Quad Set:
Tighten your top thigh muscle to press the back of your knee downward. If you are having difficulty, attempt to put a rolled up towel under the knee and press into the towel



Quad Set (sitting):
You may also perform this exercise while sitting



Straight Leg Raise:
While lying on your back, raise up your leg with a straight knee. Keep the opposite knee bent with the foot planted on the ground. Perform with the brace on and locked into extension until 4-6 weeks post-op AND you are able to raise your leg and keep your knee locked in an extended (straightened) position

Hip Strength

- Perform 3-5x/day
- Perform 3 sets of 10-20
- You should feel a tightening in the buttock muscles



HIP ABDUCTION - SIDELYING

While lying on your side, slowly raise up your top leg to the side. Keep your knee straight and maintain your toes pointed forward the entire time. Keep your leg in-line with your body.



BRIDGING ON HEELS:

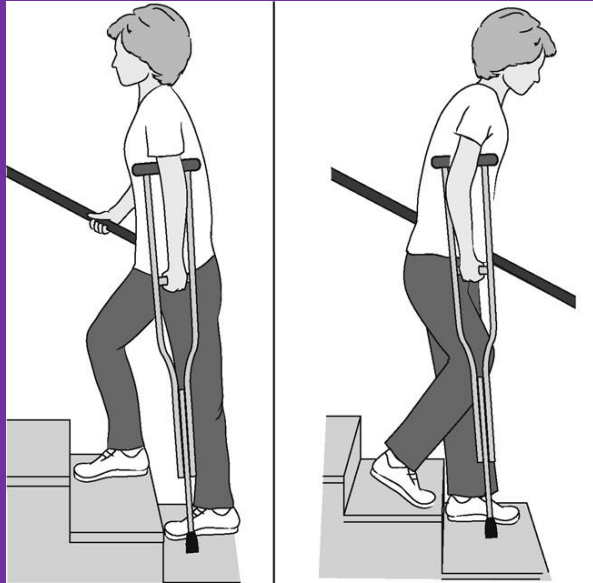
While lying on your back with knees bent, tighten your lower abdominals, squeeze your buttocks and then raise your buttocks off the floor/bed as creating a "Bridge" with your body. Hold and then lower yourself and repeat.



PRONE HIP EXTENSION

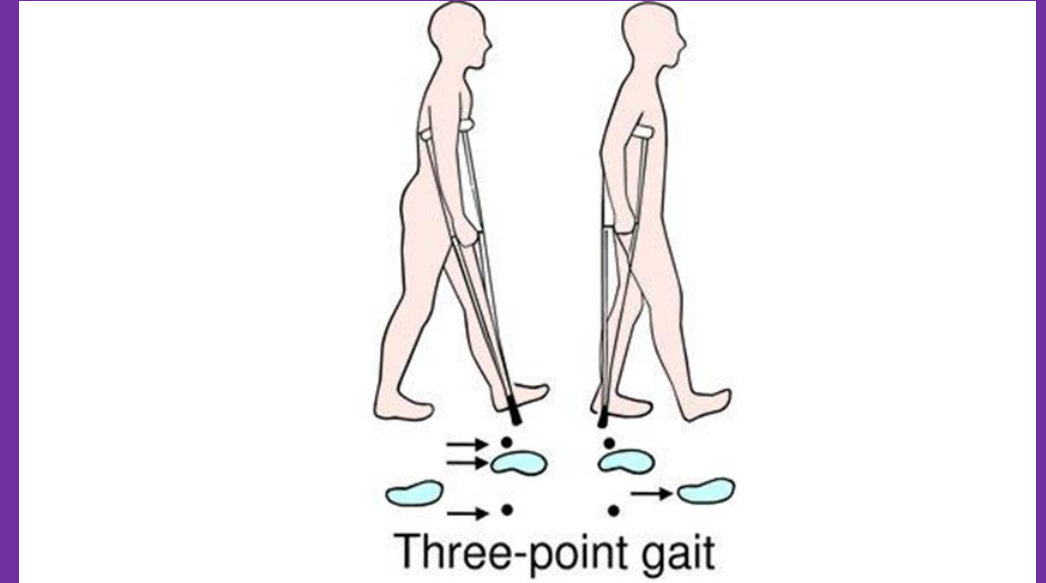
While lying face down with your knee straight, slowly raise up leg off the ground. Maintain a straight knee the entire time.

Daily Activity Training



Note: Left leg is surgically repaired knee in picture shown

When using the stairs, hold the crutches in one hand and the handrail with the other. Remember “up with the good, down with the bad”. That means when going up the stairs, start with your good leg and when going down, start with the affected (surgical) leg.



Note: Left leg is surgically repaired knee in picture shown

When walking with crutches, place crutches and affected leg in front of you first and place as much weight through your arms as needed to take pressure off of your leg. Then, swing your good leg forwards (as shown in the picture).

Phase II Progressions (>6 weeks post-op)

- Attempt 1-3x/day
- Attempt 5-10 reps for 2-3 sets
- *Please discuss with your surgeon if you are ready to begin these exercises*



SINGLE LEG BALANCE

Stand on one leg and maintain your balance.



MINI SQUATS:

Stand at countertop and bend knees for a mini squat. Keep knees behind toes.

-you may hold onto something sturdy like a sink or a stable chair



STEP UP:

While standing with both feet on the floor, step up a step with one leg. Return backward towards the floor leading with the same leg.



Sit to Stand:

Attempt standing from a chair with equal weight through both legs. Progress by placing more weight through your affected leg