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ACL PATELLAR TENDON AUTOGRAFT RECONSTRUCTION REHABILITATION PROTOCOL

	WEIGHT BEARING	BRACE	ROM	THERAPEUTIC EXERCISES
PHASE I 0 - 4 weeks	As tolerated with crutches*	0-2 weeks: locked in full extension for ambulation and sleeping 2-4 weeks: unlocked for ambulation, remove for sleeping**	As tolerated	Heel slides, quad/hamstring sets, patellar mobs, prone hangs, gastroc/soleus stretch***, SLR with brace in full extension until quad strength prevents extension lag
PHASE II 4 - 6 weeks	Gradually discontinue crutch use	Discontinue use when patient has full extension and no extension lag	Maintain full extension and progressive flexion	Progress to weight bearing gastroc/soleus stretch, begin toe raises, closed chain extension, balance exercises, hamstring curls, and stationary bike
PHASE III 6 weeks - 4 months	Full, without use of crutches and with a normalized gait pattern	None	Gain full and pain-free	Advance closed chain strengthening, progress proprioception activities, begin Stairmaster/Nordic Trac and running straight ahead at 12 weeks
PHASE IV 4 - 6 months	Full	None	Full and pain-free	Progress flexibility/strengthening, progression of function: forward/backward running, cutting, grapevine, etc., initiate plyometric program and sport-specific drills May add open chain quad exercises
PHASE V 6 months and beyond	Full	None	Full and pain-free	Gradual return to sports participation, maintenance program for strength and endurance At patient's discretion, a functional ACL brace may be used from 6 mo to 1 yr post-op

*Modified with concomitantly performed meniscus repair/transplantation or articular cartilage procedure

***This exercise is to be completed in a non-weight bearing position