

Physical Therapy Protocol: Non-Op Patella Fracture

Phase I, 0-4 weeks

Range-of-Motion:

- Hinged knee brace locked at 0 degrees for first 2 weeks
- After week 2, may begin PT for intermittent active and active assisted flexion with passive extension for 5-10 minutes QID and patellar mobilization activity
- Stay within 0-30 degrees ROM for weeks 2-4
- Strength: isometric hamstrings utilizing an endurance program of 10-40 repetitions per set with 5 sets per day
- Avoid active knee extension
- Avoid prone knee flexion

Weight Bearing:

- 100% with brace locked in full extension
- Modalities: EMG biofeedback to hamstrings (no quadriceps) if desired
- Cryotherapy

Sports:

- None

Phase II, 4-6 weeks

Range of Motion:

- Week 5: 0-45 degrees
- Week 6: 0-60 degrees
- After week 6, advance ROM to 0-90 as tolerated; brace locked in full extension when ambulating only
- Strength: initiate quadriceps strengthening and SLR

Weight Bearing:

- 100% with brace locked in full extension
- Modalities: PRN – as above

Sports:

- None

Phase III, 6-8 weeks

Range of Motion and Brace Use:

- Increase as tolerated
- DISCONTINUE BRACE IF YOU CAN WALK WITHOUT A LIMP AND IF YOU CAN MAINTAIN A STRAIGHT LEG RAISE WITHOUT YOUR LEG WOBBLING
- If the above conditions are not met, keep the brace on and walk with the brace unlocked
- Strength: progress with exercises and hamstring and quadriceps strengthening
- Ok to begin stationary cycling as tolerated

Weight Bearing:

- Full +/- brace; recommend using the brace (unlocked) if icy conditions outside or if the environment is dangerous/crowded public areas

Sports:

- None

Phase IV, 8-12 weeks and beyond

Range of Motion and Brace Use:

- If not weaned from brace yet, continue exercises and strengthening to do so at this time
- ROM and strengthening as tolerated

Modalities:

- PRN

Sports:

- Progress through graduated running program/functional rehabilitation program
- Resume main sports if patient has obtained near full ROM and has obtained at least 80% of quad and hamstring strength as compared to the other extremity
- Usually back to full sports by 3-4 months. Progress through working conditioning, if applicable.