



Indiana University Health

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## **Patella or Quadriceps Tendon Repair; Patella ORIF**

*(Updated 4/2025)*

### **General Post Op Instructions**

<b>Wound Care</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Dressings can be removed 2 days after surgery, or they can be removed at the first physical therapy appointment</li> <li>✓ If desired, incisions may be covered with simple dressings (band-aids)</li> </ul>
<b>Swelling</b>	→ Swelling and bruising are to be expected after a surgical procedure
<b>Ice and Elevate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ice 20 minutes on 20 minutes off, several times a day to help with swelling</li> <li>✓ Do not place ice or cold back directly onto the skin</li> <li>✓ Elevate the limb above the heart when able</li> </ul>
<b>Showering</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Do not soak incisions in water until after stitches are removed</li> <li>→ You may begin to shower 2 days after surgery after dressings are removed               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Allow soapy water to run over the incision but do not scrub</li> <li>○ Dry, apply band-aids if needed</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ Brace may be removed for hygiene</li> </ul>
<b>Driving</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Dr. Call does not release patients to drive at a specific date or week post op</li> <li>✓ It is unlawful to drive under the influence of opioid (strong pain) medications</li> <li>✓ Must be able to safely apply the brakes before returning to drive</li> <li>✓ Driving in a brace/sling/boot is not recommended</li> </ul>

### **Weight Bearing Restrictions and Brace Use**

	Weight bearing and Brace	ROM Limits
Week 1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ WBAT</li> <li>✓ Hinged knee brace locked in extension for ambulation and sleep</li> </ul>	✓ 0-30 degrees
Weeks 3-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ WBAT</li> <li>✓ Hinged knee brace locked in extension for ambulation</li> <li>✓ DC brace at night at week 6</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Week 3: 0-45 degrees</li> <li>✓ Week 4: 0-60 degrees</li> </ul>
Week 6 +	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Wean off crutches or walker</li> <li>✓ Week 6-7: WBAT, knee brace locked 0-90 degrees</li> <li>✓ Week 8+: DC brace</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Week 6: 0-90 degrees</li> <li>✓ Week 8: 0-110 degrees</li> <li>✓ Week 10+: progress to full ROM</li> </ul>



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### Immediate Post Operative Phase (up to week 4)

<b>Overall Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Protect fixation and surrounding soft tissues</li> <li>✓ Decrease pain and effusion</li> <li>✓ Restoration of full passive knee extension</li> <li>✓ Gradual improvement of knee flexion</li> <li>✓ Regain quadriceps control</li> </ul>
<b>Cautions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ No active knee extension for 6 weeks</li> <li>→ Extended periods of standing and walking should be avoided</li> <li>→ Patient needs to mobilize</li> </ul>
<b>Range of Motion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Follow ROM restrictions above</li> </ul>
<b>Therapeutic Suggestions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Vasopneumatic pump and cryotherapy to decrease swelling if desired</li> <li>→ Patellar mobilization - medial and lateral</li> <li>→ Long sit hamstring stretch</li> <li>→ Gastroc stretch with towel</li> <li>→ Ankle pumps to prevent lower leg edema and to prevent DVT</li> <li>→ If patient can not get knee fully extended, perform heel prop in supine to get full passive extension</li> <li>→ Quad sets, gluteal sets, adductor sets in supine</li> <li>→ SLR-Hip Flexion, Hip Abduction, Hip Extension in brace locked in extension (assist as needed)</li> <li>→ Gradual return to daily activities with crutches or walker</li> </ul>
<b>Progression Ready to Next Phase</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Full passive knee extension</li> <li>✓ Knee Flexion to limits</li> <li>✓ Minimal pain and swelling</li> </ul> <p><i>If not all goals are met, patient may progress to the next phase with intervention plan in place to address deficiencies</i></p>

### Intermediate Rehabilitation Phase (Weeks 5 – 8)

<b>Overall Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Protect repair</li> <li>✓ Progress physical therapy</li> </ul>
<b>Cautions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ No active knee extension for 6 weeks</li> <li>→ Wean off crutches around week 6</li> </ul>
<b>Range of Motion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Knee flexion limited to 90 degrees for the first 6 weeks</li> </ul>
<b>Therapeutic Suggestions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Gravity Assisted Seated Knee Flexion to 90 degrees</li> <li>→ Closed chain strengthening</li> <li>→ AA Knee Flexion using other leg if patient having difficulty regaining knee flexion to 90</li> </ul>



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	→ If patient can lift 3 lbs on 4 way SLR- progress to hip strengthening on the cable column or multi-hip machine → Can begin aquatic exercise for open chain hip flexion/abduction/adduction/ extension → If patient having difficulty maintaining full extension, begin prone leg hang → Seated heel raise → Standing bilateral heel raise → Weight shift-laterally, diagonally and forward → Closed chain terminal knee extension in standing with theraband behind knee → Heel slides
<b>Progression</b>	✓ Meeting ROM limits/goals
<b>Ready to</b>	✓ Minimal pain and swelling
<b>Next Phase</b>	✓ Full active knee extension

### Advance Strengthening Phase (Weeks 9 – 12)

<b>Overall Goals</b>	✓ Recover normal gait pattern and improve functional activities ✓ Gradually increase to full ROM ✓ Gradually improve quadriceps strength/endurance
<b>Cautions</b>	→ No jogging or running
<b>Range of Motion</b>	✓ Progress to full ROM
<b>Therapeutic Suggestions</b>	→ Leg press → Wall sits/slides → Stationary bike → Week 10: ○ Add physioball ○ Treadmill walking ○ Elliptical ○ Single leg heel rise
<b>Progression</b>	✓ Full ROM
<b>Ready to</b>	✓ Minimal discomfort with exercises
<b>Next Phase</b>	

### Late Rehabilitation and Strengthening Phase (Week 13 – 24)

<b>Overall Goals</b>	✓ Progress muscular strength
<b>Cautions</b>	→ None
<b>Range of Motion</b>	✓ Full ROM
<b>Therapeutic Suggestions</b>	→ Lateral shuffle/Carioca → Agility Ladder



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→ Treadmill jogging

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<b>Progression</b>	✓	Full non-painful ROM
<b>Ready to</b>	✓	Strength within 80-90% of contralateral extremity
<b>Agility</b>	✓	Balance and/or stability within 75-80% of contralateral extremity
<b>Training</b>	✓	No pain, inflammation or swelling
<b>Return to</b>	✓	Around 5-6 months post op
<b>Sports</b>	✓	Completion of running and agility program without symptoms with good form
	✓	Quadriceps strength 85-90 %
	✓	Hamstring strength 85-90 %
	✓	Good balance and proprioception

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