

TYPICAL REHABILITATION GUIDE FOLLOWING MICROFRACTURE SURGERY



Rehabilitation will be dependent upon the size and site of the treated area. Timescales may vary for each individual depending on their specific circumstances.

RECOVERY PHASE (WEEKS 0 -2)

THEME: REST, REDUCE BRUISING & PAIN CONTROL

Microfracture surgery effectively causes a new injury to the knee. It is very important not to “overdo things” initially and allow the injury to settle.

Spend the majority of time at home with the knee elevated to the level of your chest

Tubigrip support dressings will produce gentle compression

Regular icing of the knee – 20 minutes, 5+ times a day

Regular simple pain killers

Regular foot and ankle exercises to help circulate venous blood

Goals: Pain control, wound healing & reduce swelling

REHABILITATION PHASE 1 (APPROX. WEEKS 0-6)

THEME: PROTECTED WEIGHT BEARING, RANGE OF MOVEMENT AND SWELLING REDUCTION.

During this period the knee starts to become less painful – allowing increased activity and mobility. The aim is to regain a full range of movement and reduce swelling.

Use crutches to put minimal weight through the leg

Continue to ice the knee after exercise and take simple pain killers as needed

Concentrate on regaining full knee extension. Knee flexion tends to improve as the swelling reduces

Regular range of movement exercises – High frequency/Low resistance exercises (Stationary bike with no resistance or skateboard exercise whilst sitting)

Goals: Full range of movement, minimize force across the knee & reduce swelling

REHABILITATION PHASE 3 (APPROX 6 – 16 WEEKS)

THEME: REGAIN STRENGTH & BALANCE

During this period the objective is to restore power and strength to the knee. Following the “trauma” of microfracture surgery it is inevitable that the muscles around the knee (especially the quadriceps) waste away. Strength needs to be restored to allow further activities.

You should now begin walking normally and put weight through the knee as comfort allows.

Commence a gym based exercise programme emphasising strengthening of all muscle groups including quadriceps, hamstrings, calf, gluteals & core strength. Activities include walking, cycling, swimming, rowing, cross-trainer

Don't overdo it! – slowly build up your activities and regain your strength.

Icing is still recommended after exercise

Goals: Single leg squats to 90degrees, normal walking, minimal swelling, cycling.

REHABILITATION PHASE 3 (APPROX. 16 – 24 WEEKS)

THEME: LIGHT AGILITIES & FOOTWORK

During this period of rehabilitation power, reflexes and balance return to the knee – permitting increasingly strenuous activity and the start of more “dangerous” side-stepping or “cutting” manoeuvres.

You may now commence jogging – avoid uneven ground and icy or slippery conditions

Begin plyometric exercises – jumping, hopping, Short straight line sprints

Zig zag running & side to side hops

Gently build up activity as power and confidence returns

Ice after activities

Goals: Power, balance & proprioception restoration in preparation for sports specific training

REHABILITATION PHASE 4 (APPROX. 24 – 48 WEEKS)

THEME: ENDURANCE TRAINING, INJURY PREVENTION & SPORTS SPECIFIC TRAINING

Fitness & aerobic endurance training

General Strengthening work

Sports specific training and exercises as directed by team or sports physiotherapist

Goals: Develop Match Fitness, regain sports specific skills and prevent further injury