MCL REPAIR OR RECONSTRUCTION REHABILITATION PROTOCOL

	WEIGHT BEARING	BRACE	ROM	EXERCISES
PHASE I 0-2 weeks	Heel touch weightbearing with crutches	Locked in full extension for sleeping and all activity* Off for exercises and hygiene	0-90° when non-weight bearing	Heel slides, quad sets, patellar mobs, SLR, SAQ, calf pumps, passive leg hangs to 90 **Avoid valgus stress for 8 wks to protect MCL**
PHASE II 2-8 weeks	**2-6 weeks:** Heel touch WB with crutches **6-8 weeks**: Progress to full WB	**2-8 weeks:** Brace worn daytime only, unlocked 0-90° Discontinue brace by 8 weeks when comfortable WB	As tolerated, caution to avoid valgus stress	**2-6wks:** PROM/AAROM to tolerance, patella and tibiofibular joint mobs, floor and side-lying quad, hamstring, glutes, hip and core **6-8wks:** Addition of heel raises, closed chain lower body, gait normalization, eccentric quads/hamstrings; advance core, glutes and pelvic stability Activities w/ brace until 6 weeks; then w/o brace as tolerated **Avoid valgus stress for 8 wks to protect MCL**
PHASE III 8-12 weeks	Full	None	Full	Progress closed chain activities Begin unilateral stance activities, balance training, lunges/leg press 0-90°, proprioception exercises, progress core/hip/glutes, hamstring work
PHASE IV 12-16 weeks	Full	None	Full	Progress Phase III exercises and functional activities; maximize core/glutes, pelvic stability work, eccentric hamstrings, balance Begin stationary bike at 12 wks with low resistance Swimming okay at 12 wks
PHASE V > 16 weeks	Full	None	Full	Start elliptical and running after 16 weeks Advance to sport-specific drills and running after 16-20 weeks as tolerated

*Brace may be removed for sleeping after first post-operative visit (day 7-10)

BRIAN J. COLE, MD, MBA
MIDWEST ORTHOPAEDICS AT RUSH
BrianColeMD.com

© 2003-2026 Dr. Brian J Cole, MD,MBA. All rights reserved.