


<p><b>Ken Jansson, M.D.</b> <i>Advanced Orthopaedic Associates</i> <i>Board Certified in Orthopaedic Surgery</i> <i>and Orthopaedic Sports Medicine</i> 2778 N. Webb Rd. Wichita , KS 67226 316-631-1600      1 (800) 362-0591 Fax: (316) 631-1638</p>	
--	--

**ACL RECONSTRUCTION GUIDELINES**

**PHASE I – MAXIMUM PROTECTION**

**STAGE 1**

Time: 0-2 DAYS

Brace: Worn at all time with the knee locked at 0 degrees

Polar Pack – use continuously

Weight bearing – To tolerance unless an abrasion arthroplasty was done in conjunction with the ACL

Exercises:

- Quad sets.
- Straight leg raises.
- Gentle hamstrings sets
- Ankle pumps

CAUTIONS – If patient complains of increased numbness or significant levels of pain or weakness in the lower leg, then loosen the straps on the brace. If there is no change, loosen the dressing. If still no change, contact the referring Physician

**STAGE 2**

Time: 2 days – 3 weeks

Brace –opened to 60 degrees at first visit. Then increase the motion to 120 degrees as tolerated within pain and swelling tolerances to 120 degrees by 2 weeks post-op  
Brace should be worn at all times when leaving the house or when outdoors. Check with Physician prior to sleeping without it.

Polar Pack – Use as indicated

Weight bearing – Partial weight bearing to tolerance Progress to walking with one crutch. When walking can be achieved with minimal compensation, discontinue crutches

Exercises

- Quad sets

## ACL Reconstruction Therapy Guidelines

- Straight leg raises. **If an extensor lag, start with sideling terminal knee extension to help regain full active extension**
- Active knee flexion – NO RESISTANCE
- Short arc quads –NO RESISTANCE
- Hip abduction, adduction and extension with resistance above the knees
- Hamstring, calf and IT band stretches as indicated.
- Patellar mobilization
- Long sitting leg press/hip sled through abbreviated range
- Biking may be initiated with no resistance when range of motion is appropriate
- Use electrical stimulation for muscle re-education of quad function/quad tone is poor.
- Soft tissue mobilization – start to portals and incision as needed when they are healed

### STAGE 3

Time: 3-6 weeks

Brace – Continue to wear with brace opened to full range

Weight bearing –Full weight bearing

- For abrasion arthroplasty, may begin increasing weigh bearing at end of week 3. If they can walk with minimal compensation by week 4, they may be off the crutches. They should be off the crutches by week 5-6

Exercises

- Continue with exercises from Stage 2
- Step-ups, both forward and side beginning with a height that can be well controlled
- BAPS board/KAT – start seated and progress to standing as you can weight bear comfortably.
- Closed chain activities such as modified lunges, mini squats
- Balance activities – stork stance, mini-tramp
- Aquatic exercises can be initiated
- NO OPEN CHAIN RESISTED EXERCISES

### PHASE II – MODERATE PROTECTION

Stage 4

Time: 6-8 weeks

Weight bearing –full weight bearing, all patients

Exercises

- Continue with above exercises
- Start with coordination, agility drills such as ladder drills, but not at full speed
- Increase proprioceptive activities
- Increase reps and resistance with closed chain activities.

## ACL Reconstruction Therapy Guidelines

### PHASE III - MINIMUM PROTECTION

Stage 5

Weeks 8 – 12

Brace – continue to wear as instructed.

#### Exercises

- Continue to work as above
- Continue to increase the intensity of agility/coordination workouts.
- Work on cross training activities such as EFX, Arc trainer, running in water to work on strength and cardiovascular fitness
- Initiate low level sports specific training.

DO AN ISOKINETIC STRENGTH TEST AT 12 WEEKS TO DETERMINE  
RUNNING POTENTIAL 90°/sec and 240°/sec

- Test from 45 to 90 degrees.
- If the involved quad strength is 70% of the uninvolved, may begin running in the sports brace

#### Stage

Weeks 12+

- Continue to work on aggressive strengthening
- Continue with coordination/agility/plyometrics activities
- Increase intensity of sports specific training.

Plan on retesting at 6 months.

Brace use will usually be recommended for 1 year and thru the first season back to athletics.