

Non-Operative MCL Injury Guideline

Time	Goals	Precautions/Restrictions	Treatment
Weeks 0 - 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce pain and swelling • Maintain patellar mobility • Prevent muscle inhibition • ROM 10-100 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No valgus stress • Brace locked in extension with WB • Do not force painful ROM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain free A/AROM • Effusion management • Quadriceps recruitment/NMES • Patellar mobilization • Initiate BFR; if applicable
Weeks 3 – 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full and pain-free ROM • Progression of quadriceps strength/endurance • Normalized gait mechanics • Attain 80% limb symmetry in knee extensors • No episodes of instability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No valgus stress • Unlock brace • No running, jumping, cutting, pivoting, or twisting • Avoid painful activities/exercises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress ROM as tolerated • Progress strengthening in pain free ranges • Core stabilization exercises • Initiate balance/proprioceptive exercises • Optional therapies: anti-gravity treadmill
Weeks 6 - 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full, symmetric ROM • Progressive resistance training • Increase functional activities • Pass return to run criteria • No effusion with increased activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wean from brace • Avoid painful activities/exercises • Avoid activities causing instability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressive double and single limb strengthening • End range flexion and extension • Aerobic training on stationary bike, elliptical, stair climber, UBE • Progression of balance/proprioception • Consider low intensity agility drills
Weeks 8 - 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full, symmetric ROM • Progress sport specific training • Successful return to run program • Pass return to sport criteria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strength > 90% LSI ○ Hop tests > 90% LSI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid painful activities/exercises • No jogging on painful or swollen knee • Full clearance from physician 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress hypertrophy and strength training • Progress change of direction and sport-specific drills • Gradual RTS progression if criteria passed • Implement ARC program

This guideline is not meant to be prescriptive but a recommendation to the rehabilitation process. Progress may vary based on specifics of injury and procedure.