Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) Reconstruction With Meniscus Repair (Radial/Root) and Posterolateral Corner Reconstruction Postoperative Protocol

**Phase I – Maximum protection**

**Weeks 0–3:**
- Brace – 0-90 degrees for unloaded range of motion only
  - Recommend locking in extension during sleep
- Use two crutches NWB at all times for 6 weeks
- Limit knee flexion to 90 degrees for 3 weeks

**Goals**
- Reduce inflammation and pain
- 0 degrees of knee extension

**Exercise progression**
- Emphasize patellofemoral mobilizations
- Passive-active knee range of motion with 90-degree flexion limit
- Quadriceps setting emphasize VMO function
- Multi-plane straight leg raising
- Open chain hip strengthening
- Gait training

**Weeks 3–6:**
- Limit knee flexion to 120 degrees

**Goals**
- Reduce inflammation and pain
- Maintain 0 degrees of knee extension

**Phase II – Progressive stretching and early strengthening**

**Weeks 6–8:**
- Brace – open to 0-90 degrees for ambulation; do not have to sleep in brace
- Continue using two crutches, with gradual progression of weight-bearing
  - Increase WB to FWB over next 2 weeks

**Goals**
- Full knee extension/hyperextension
- Gradual progression to full knee flexion
- No swelling
- Normal gait

**Exercise progression**
- Continue to emphasize patellar mobility
- Begin bilateral closed kinetic chain strengthening (limited range initially)
- Step-up progression
- Begin stationary bike with light resistance initially
- Proprioception drills

**Phase III – Advanced strengthening and proprioception**

**Weeks 8–10:**
- Discontinue brace

**Goals**
- Full knee flexion and extension
Exercise progression
- Avoid rotational movements until 14 weeks
- Begin full gym strengthening program
- Advance stationary biking program (increase intensity)
- Introduce treadmill walking and elliptical trainer
- Begin unilateral closed kinetic chain program
- Gym strengthening progression (leg press above 90 degrees, hamstring curls, etc.)

**Weeks 10–12:**
- Exercise progression
  - Outdoor biking
  - Lung progression (retro, walk and split) as indicated
  - Forward/backward elevated treadmill walking

**Weeks 12–14:**
Administer preliminary functional test for physician to review

**Phase IV – Advanced strengthening and running progression**

**Weeks 12–20:**
- Exercise progression
  - Progress resistance with squat and lunge strengthening program
  - Begin light plyometric drills; progress from bilateral to unilateral
  - Begin linear jogging – week 16
  - Progress to lateral and rotational stresses at 18 weeks
  - Multidirectional drills at 18-20 weeks

**Phase V – Return to sport**

**Weeks 20–24:**
- Exercise progression
  - Advance ladder, hurdle and plyometric box progressions
  - Sport-specific field/court drills
  - Noncontact drills

**Criteria to be released for return to sport**
- Follow-up examination with the physician
- Pass return-to-sport functional test at >90% (involved vs. uninvolved limb)
- See testing protocol
- Display symmetry and confidence in high-speed cutting, multiplane plyometric drills, sprinting and decelerating

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