

Patella Fracture Protocol (Op and Non-Op)

Physical Therapy Protocol

Keys to a Successful Outcome

- Pain > 4/10 = Hold progression
- ROM exercises should not be forceful or too painful
- The brace should be locked in extension until 6 weeks from surgery while weight bearing

Phase	Brace	ROM Goals	WB	Exercises
Weeks 0-2	Locked in extension, worn at all times except therapy	PROM 0-20°	WBAT w/ brace locked in extension	Isometric quad, ham, add/abd strengthening; ankle Theraband exercises
Weeks 2-6	Locked in extension, worn at all times except therapy	PROM 0-45°	WBAT w/ brace locked in extension	Advance previous exercises: add straight leg raise, patellar mobilization
Weeks 6-10	Brace unlocked 0-90°	Progressive P/AROM	WBAT	Advance previous exercises
Weeks 10-12	None	FAROM	WBAT	Start stationary bike. bilateral leg press in safe range (30-45°), concentric only
Months 3-6	None	FAROM	WBAT	Begin wall squats, progressive plyometrics, running, sport-specific

Patient Instructions

- Call MD for redness, drainage, or worsening pain

General Time Frames for ADLs

- Desk/light return to work: 6-12 wks
- Early impact/jogging: 12-16 wks
- Begin return-to-sport phase: 4-6 mo
- Professional athletes return to play at an average of about 7 mo after an isolated patella fracture