

**Jeffrey Dean, MD
Orthopedic Surgeon**

PATELLAR TENDON REPAIR (Rehabilitative Guidelines)

Revised January 2003

Post-op Days 1 – 14

Dressing – POD 1: Debulk dressing, TED Hose in place
– POD 2: Change dressing, keep wound covered, continue TED Hose
– POD 7-10: Sutures out, D/C TED Hose
Brace – locked in extension for ambulation
Crutches – PWB
Patellar mobilization – teach patient
Calf pumping
PEAF (passive extension-active flexion), heel slides, 0-45 degrees
Passive extension with heel on bolster or prone hangs
Electrical stimulation – sub-maximal quad sets for muscle re-education
Quad sets, Co-contractions Quads/HS
SLR x 4 in standing (in brace)
Gentle HS stretch
Ice Pack with knee in full extension after exercise

Goals – Full passive extension, Good quad control, Pain/effusion control

Weeks 2 – 4

Brace – locked in extension for ambulation
Crutches – WBAT (D/C when gait is WNL)
Continue appropriate previous exercises
PEAF, AAROM 0-70 degrees
SLR x 4 on mat (in brace)
HS curls with light weight, 0-45 degrees
Double leg heel raises
Proprioceptive training (in brace) – single leg standing in parallel bars
– double leg BAPS for weight shift
Stretches – HS, AT, ITB

Goals – ROM 0-70 degrees, No ext lag

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Weeks 4 – 6

Brace – Locked at 0-30 degrees
Continue appropriate previous exercises
PEAF, AAROM 0-90 degrees
Standing SLR x 4 (in brace) with Theraband bilaterally
HS curls 0-90 degrees with light weight
Forward, lateral, and retro step downs in parallel bars
 – No knee flexion past 45 degrees
Single leg heel raises
Body Blade (in brace)
Elliptical trainer

Goals – Normal gait, ROM 0-90 degrees

Weeks 6 – 8

Brace – gradually open to patient's available range
Continue appropriate previous exercises
AAROM 0-120 degrees
Active knee extension without weight
Leg press – light weight
Mini squats, wall squats
Heel raises with resistance on leg press
SLR x 4 on mat with light weight below the knee
Proprioceptive training (in brace) – progress to single leg BAPS, ball toss
 and body blade
Stationary bike
Treadmill – Backwards and forwards walking
Pool therapy (flutter kicks from hip with knee in extension)

Goal – ROM 0-120

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Weeks 8 – 12

D/C Brace
Continue appropriate previous exercises
AROM, AAROM – full range
Full HS curls
Functional activities – Fitter, slide board
Treadmill – Forwards walking approaching 15 min/mile pace

Goals – Full ROM, Walk 2 miles at 15 min/mile pace

Months 3 – 4

Continue appropriate previous exercises
Begin gym program
Knee extension with resistance
Treadmill – Begin light jogging
Quad and hip flexor stretches
Pool therapy – Begin swimming laps

Goal – Jog for 10 minutes with normal gait pattern

Months 4 – 6

Continue appropriate previous exercises
Home/gym program
Agility drills / Plyometrics
Sit-up progression
Treadmill – Running progression program

Goals – Return to all activities, Pass APFT at 6 months post op

No contact sports until 6 months post-op

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References:

1. Marder RA, Timmerman LA. Primary Repair of Patellar Tendon Rupture Without Augmentation. *AJSM*, Vol. 27, No. 3, p. 304, 1999
2. Matava MJ. Patellar Tendon Ruptures. *JAM Acad Orthop Surg*, 4:287-296, 1996