



David Edell, LAT, ATC, CSCS

Cellular: 713.858.3802 • Fax: 281.341.3012 • E-Mail: dedell@athleticadvisor.com

Isolated Medial Collateral Ligament (MCL) Sprain Rehabilitation Protocol

PHASE I

1. Ice, preferably, ice massage, as often as possible, before and after exercise sessions.
2. Hinged brace allowing for non-painful range of motion, if indicated.
3. Partial to full weight bearing in brace with crutches as tolerated.
4. Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications (NSAID's) as prescribed by physician.
5. Range of motion exercises performed 3 times daily.
 - a. Heel Slices,
 - b. Quadriceps Sets,
 - c. Ankle ABC's
6. Strengthening exercises performed 3 times daily.
 - a. Straight Leg Raises: prone, supine, abduction (NO ADDUCTION),
 - b. Standing Knee Flexion, Knee Extension, Hip Flexion, and Terminal Knee Extension (TKE),
 - c. Seated Isometric Ball Squeezes,
 - d. Heel Raises with balance assistance,
 - e. Partial Squats with balance assistance
7. Stationary bicycle riding with seat as low as tolerated
8. Progress to Phase II when Phase I can be completed with little or no discomfort, increase in swelling, or point tenderness.

PHASE II

1. Continue all activities in Phase I as indicated.
2. Continue all strengthening exercises using PRE Principle
3. Begin Side Step-Ups with 1 1/2" - 3" step.
4. Begin StairClimber activities.
5. Begin static stretching as tolerable.
6. Progress to Phase III when Phase II can be completed with:
 - a. No increase in pain or swelling,
 - b. Normal Gait, and
 - c. Normal knee stability.

PHASE III

1. Continue ice after exercise sessions if pain and/or swelling is present.
2. Discontinue use of brace for daily activities with physician approval
3. Continue SLR PRE's and add:
 - a. Standing sport cord TKE's,
 - b. Leg Press 90° - 0° as tolerated, and
 - c. Slide Board.
4. Begin walk/jog program on flat, smooth surface
5. Progress to Phase IV when 50 yard jog can be completed with little or no limping and/or pain.

PHASE IV

Continue PRE's.

1. Progress walk/jog program to include sprints and agility drills
 - a. Figure 8's,
 - b. Carioca, and
 - c. Zig-Zag Drills.
2. Return to desired activity when:
 - a. Phase IV can be completed without pain, swelling, or limp,
 - b. Bilateral girth and range of motion measurements are equal,
 - c. Strength measurements are 85% of contralateral side, and
 - d. Clearance from physician.

Patients heal at different rates, possess various pre-operative deficiencies, and require specific attributes to perform normal function. Due to these factors, this protocol must be individualized to each patient to allow for optimal return to desired activities.