

POST-OPERATIVE REHABILITATION: PIRIFORMIS RELEASE

Therapy Plan: Twice per week for 0-2 months, once per week for 2-4 months

ROM Progression

Progress ROM as tolerated with an emphasis on hip internal rotation immediately after surgery with the goal of symmetric full motion at 4-6 weeks.

Weight Bearing Progression

Initial weight bearing as tolerated with crutches to assist as needed

- Progress weight bearing over weeks 1-2 with the goal of removing crutches at 2 weeks
- Do NOT progress to one crutch - gait must be pain free and non-compensatory to remove both crutches

Initial Post-Operative Physical Therapy Visit

- Correctly perform normal gait cycle with full weight bearing without limping
- Hip internal rotation stretching
- Isometric exercises for core, glutes, quadriceps, hamstrings

Phase 1 Physical Therapy (2-4 weeks): protect the joint and avoid irritation

- NO open-chain exercises
- Manual therapy 20+ minutes per session
- Stretching with an emphasis on hip internal rotation
- Tactile and verbal cueing to enable non-compensatory gait patterning
- Soft tissue mobilization, isometric exercises, core strengthening

Phase 2 Physical Therapy (4-6 weeks): non-compensatory gait and progression

- Tactile and verbal cueing to enable non-compensatory gait patterning
- Progress stretching for flexion-extension, adduction-abduction, and rotation
- Soft tissue and joint mobilization, isometric exercises, core strengthening
- Standing weight shifts, backward/lateral walking without resistance
- Closed-chain strengthening and planks starting at 6 weeks advancing as tolerated
- Elliptical may begin at 4 weeks

Phase 3 Physical Therapy (6-12 weeks): return to pre-injury level

- Focus on functional exercises in all planes, advance only when fully controlled
- Soft tissue and joint mobilization, closed-chain exercises, core strengthening
- Strengthening: lunges, resisted side steps, planks
- Slide board and hip rotation movements may begin at 8 weeks

Phase 4 Physical Therapy (12+ weeks): return to sport

- Full return may take a full 4-6 months or more and requires functional assessment prior to return
- Soft tissue and joint mobilization, closed-chain exercises, core strengthening
- Agility drills and pool (or Alter G) running may begin at 12 weeks
- Straight running and cutting may begin at 12 weeks
- Plyometric and sport-specific drills may begin at 12 weeks