ARTICULAR CARTILAGE TRANSPLANTATION TO FEMORAL CONDYLE
Post-Operative Physical Therapy Protocol

General Considerations:
- Progression should be based on careful monitoring by the Physical Therapist of the patient’s functional status.
- Patients are cleared to drive once they are off all narcotic pain medications typically around week 2, or if cleared by Physical Therapist.
- Non-weight bearing status for 4 weeks post-op (resting foot on floor and driving are okay).
- No direct palpation to surgical portals for 4 weeks. Consider the edges of the bandages as the “do not touch” zone (approx. 2” in all directions from each surgical portal).
- Push for full extension equal to opposite side.
- Regular manual treatment should be conducted to the patella and soft tissue (except around portals) to decrease the incidence of fibrosis.
- Light to no resistance stationary cycling is okay at 2 weeks post-op (low cadence, low resistance).
- Early restoration of neuromuscular quad control is important.
- No resisted leg extension machines (isotonic or isokinetic) at any point.
- Low impact activities for 3 months post-op.
- Daily 1500-3000 mg of Glucosamine Sulfate via Joint Juice or other sources.
*Use of the continuous passive motion machine (CPM) for 6 hours a day for 4 weeks is imperative. Range of motion to be determine by MD based on location of repair.

Week 1:
- Nurse visit day 2 post-op to change dressing and review home program.
- Icing and elevation for 15-20 min every 2 hours per icing protocol.
- Continuous passive motion machine (CPM) at home for 6 hours daily/at night.

Manual:
- Soft tissue mobilization to quadriceps, posterior musculature, suprapatellar pouch, popliteal fossa, iliotibial band, Hoffa’s fat pads.
- Patellar mobilizations.
- Avoid direction palpation to portals x 4 weeks.

Exercise:
- Well-leg stationary cycling (light to no resistance), upper body ergometer.
- Range of motion exercises (passive/active), quadriceps/gluteal sets, straight leg raises (lying, seated, side-lying and standing), hip/foot/ankle exercises.
- Sit at edge of bed and allow knee to bend to 90 degrees or less for 5 minutes 4x/day in pain-free range.

Goals:
- Knee range of motion 0 to 90 degrees.
- Pain <3/10.
- Minimal edema.
- Gait non-weight bearing x 4 weeks.

Weeks 2 - 4:
- Nurse visit at 14 days for suture removal and check-up.
THE STONE CLINIC
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**Manual:**
- Continue with soft tissue mobilization to quadriceps, posterior musculature, suprapatellar pouch, popliteal fossa,
  iliotibial band, Hoffa’s fat pads.
- Manual resisted (PNF patterns) of the foot, ankle and hip; core stabilization.

**Exercise:**
- Non-weightbearing aerobic exercises (i.e. unilateral cycling, upper body ergometer, Schwinn Air-Dyne arms only).
- AFTER 2 weeks, bilateral cycling with light to no resistance, low spin cadence.

**Goals:**
Knee range of motion 0 to 100 degrees.
Gait non-weight bearing x 4 weeks.

**Weeks 4 - 6:**
-M.D. visit at 4 weeks post-op, will progress to full weight bearing weaning down to 1 crutch, cane, or no assistive device.

**Manual:**
- Continue with previous soft tissue mobilization, initiation of scar mobilization to closed surgical portals.

**Exercise:**
- Incorporate functional exercises (i.e. squats, lunges, Shuttle/leg press, calf raises, step-ups/lateral step-ups).
  - Balance/proproprioception exercises.
  - Slow to rapid walking on treadmill (preferably a low-impact treadmill).
  - Progress knee flexion range of motion.

**Goals:**
Knee range of motion 0 to 120 degrees.
Tolerate increased functional exercises/strengthening.
Gait weight bearing as tolerated work towards good quality gait with least amount of assistive device.

**Weeks 6 - 8:**
- Increase the intensity of functional exercises (i.e. add stretch cord for resistance, increase weight with weightlifting machines).
- Add lateral training exercises (side-stepping, Theraband resisted side-stepping).

**Goals:**
- Patients should be walking without a limp.
- Full active range of motion.

**Weeks 8 - 12:**
- Continue with strengthening; progress balance exercises with emphasis on dynamic tasks.
- Patients should be pursuing a home program with emphasis on sport/activity-specific training.
- Road cycling as tolerated starting in saddle, flat surface; progress cautiously.

3727 BUCHANAN STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94123
Tel.: (415) 563-3110.  Fax: (415) 563-3301.  E-mail: rehab@stoneclinic.com
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Weeks 12+:
- Complete Sport Test 1.
- Continue with strengthening, endurance, balance, and sport specific training.
- Increase intensity of low impact type cardio- swimming, cycling, elliptical, etc.
- No high impact activities X 1 year unless approved by MD.