



ROSENBERG COOLEY METCALF  
THE ORTHOPEDIC CLINIC AT PARK CITY

**Charles C. Lind, MD**  
**Tibial Tubercle Transfer**  
**Post-Operative Protocol**

**Phase I – Maximum Protection (Weeks 0 to 6):**

**0 to 2 weeks:**

- Brace locked in full extension for 6 weeks
- Non-weight bearing for 4-6 weeks per physician's instructions
- Ice and modalities to reduce pain and inflammation
- Aggressive patellar mobility drills
- Range of motion – 0° to 45° knee flexion
- Begin submaximal quadriceps setting

**Weeks 2 to 4:**

- Continue with inflammation control
- Continue with aggressive patellar mobility
- Range of motion – 0° to 60°
- Continue with submaximal quadriceps setting, isometric hamstring/groin and global lower leg strengthening

**Weeks 4 to 6:**

- Progressive weight bearing per physician's instructions
- Continue with ice and aggressive patellar mobility
- Range of motion – 0° to 90° (by week 6)
- Increase intensity with quadriceps setting

**Phase II – Progressive Range of Motion and Early Strengthening (Weeks 6 to 12):**

**Weeks 6 to 8:**

- Full weight bearing
- Open brace to 45°- 60° of flexion week 6, 90° at week 7
- Continue with swelling control and patellar mobility
- Gradually progress to full range of motion
- Begin multi-plane straight leg raising and closed kinetic chain strengthening program focusing on quality VMO function.
- Initiate open kinetic chain progressing to closed kinetic chain multi-plane hip strengthening
- Normalize gait pattern
- Begin stationary bike
- Initiate pool program

**Weeks 8 to 10:**

- Wean out of brace
- Continue with patellar mobility drills
- Normalize gait pattern
- Restore full ROM
- Progress open and closed kinetic chain program from bilateral to unilateral
- Increase intensity on stationary bike
- Begin treadmill walking program

**Weeks 10 to 12:**

- Full ROM
- Aggressive terminal quadriceps stretching
- Advance unilateral open and closed kinetic chain strengthening
- Initiate proprioception drills
- May introduce elliptical trainer

**Phase III – Progressive Strengthening (Weeks 12 to 16):****Weeks 12 to 16:**

- Advance open and closed kinetic chain strengthening
- Increase intensity on bike, treadmill, and elliptical trainer
- Increase difficulty and intensity on proprioception drills
- Begin gym strengthening: leg press, hamstring curls, ab/adduction; avoid lunges and knee extensions
- Begin multi-directional functional cord program
- Initiate pool running program

**Phase IV – Advanced Strengthening and Functional Drills (Weeks 16 to 20):****Weeks 16 to 20:**

- Continue pool running program advancing to land as tolerated

**Phase V – Plyometric Drills and Return to Sport Phase (Weeks 20 to 24):****Weeks 20 to 24:**

- Advance gym strengthening
- Progress running/sprinting program
- Begin multi-directional field/court drills
- Begin bilateral progressing to unilateral plyometric drills
- Follow-up appointment with physician
- Sports test for return to competition **6months post-op** per physician's release