



### High Tibial Osteotomy Rehabilitation Protocol\*

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This rehabilitation protocol was developed for patients who have high tibial osteotomy. Protection against any weight bearing is required for the first 4 postoperative weeks, as these forces could result in small changes in angulation which could alter the limb alignment obtained at surgery. These knees have a high risk for developing patella infera and peripatellar contractures since the osteotomy is done adjacent to the tibial tubercle and patellar tendon. The surgeon must use radiographic criteria to determine healing at the osteotomy site in order to advance weight bearing.

The protocol is divided into 6 phases according to postoperative weeks (for instance, Phase I = Postoperative Weeks 1-2). Each phase has several categories including:

- *General observation* of the patient's condition (weight bearing, pain, hemarthrosis, muscle control)
- *Evaluation* of specific variables with *goals* identified for each
- Treatment and exercise program, according to *frequency* and *duration*
- *Rehabilitation goals* which must be achieved to enter into the next phase

The **overall goals** of the reconstruction and rehabilitation are to:

- Control joint pain, swelling, hemarthrosis (minimal or none)
- Regain normal knee flexion and extension
- Regain a normal gait pattern and neuromuscular stability for ambulation
- Regain normal quadriceps, hamstring lower extremity muscle strength
- Regain normal proprioception, balance, and coordination for desired activities
- Achieve optimal functional outcome based on orthopaedic and patient goals

The supervised rehabilitation program is supplemented with a *home self-management program* which the patient performs on a daily basis. The therapist must evaluate the patient thoroughly to implement the enclosed protocol and should see the patient in the clinic for therapeutic procedures and modality treatments which are required for rehabilitation. The majority of this protocol can be accomplished at home provided patient cooperation and follow through are present. The approximate number of rehabilitation visits required for each phase are provided. Additional supervision may be required if a complication develops.

**Important postoperative signs** to monitor include:

- Loss of correction, reoccurrence of varus malalignment
- Swelling of the knee joint or soft tissues
- Abnormal pain response
- Abnormal gait pattern with or without assistive device
- Insufficient flexion or extension motions, limited patellar mobility
- Weakness (strength/control) of the lower extremity, especially the quads/hamstrings
- Insufficient lower extremity flexibility
- Delayed union/nonunion
- Peroneal nerve palsy

The patient is placed into one of four **sports activity** and **occupational activity categories** based on the following scales. It is expected that patients who follow this protocol desire to return to sports activity levels I or II, or very heavy/heavy occupations.

### 1. Cincinnati Knee Rating System Sports Activity Scale

(check one)

- Level I - jumping, hard pivoting, cutting sports (basketball, volleyball, football, gymnastics, soccer)
- Level II - running, twisting, turning (tennis, racquetball, handball, ice/field hockey, skiing, wrestling)
- Level III - light recreational sports (bicycling, swimming - no running, twisting, jumping)
- Level IV - no sports, activities of daily living only

### 2. Cincinnati Knee Rating System Occupational Rating Scale

Factor 1 sitting	Factor 2 standing/ walking	Factor 3 walking on uneven ground	Factor 4 squatting	Factor 5 climbing	Factor 6 lifting/ carrying	Factor 7 pounds carried
0 <input type="checkbox"/> 8-10 hrs/day	0 <input type="checkbox"/> 0 hrs/day	0 <input type="checkbox"/> 0 hrs/day	0 <input type="checkbox"/> 0 times/day	0 <input type="checkbox"/> 0 times/day	0 <input type="checkbox"/> 0 times/day	0 <input type="checkbox"/> 0-5 lbs
1 <input type="checkbox"/> 6-7 hrs/day	2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 hrs/day	2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 hrs/day	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 1-5 times/day	2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 flight 2 times/day	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 1-5 times/day	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 lbs
2 <input type="checkbox"/> 4-5 hrs/day	4 <input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 hrs/day	4 <input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 hrs/day	2 <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 times/day	4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 flights 2 times/day	2 <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 times/day	2 <input type="checkbox"/> 11-20 lbs
3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 hrs/day	6 <input type="checkbox"/> 4-5 hrs/day	6 <input type="checkbox"/> 4-5 hrs/day	3 <input type="checkbox"/> 11-15 times/day	6 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 flights/ ladders	3 <input type="checkbox"/> 11-15 times/day	3 <input type="checkbox"/> 21-25 lbs
4 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 hrs/day	8 <input type="checkbox"/> 6-7 hrs/day	8 <input type="checkbox"/> 6-7 hrs/day	4 <input type="checkbox"/> 16-20 times/day	8 <input type="checkbox"/> ladders with weight 2-3 days/week	4 <input type="checkbox"/> 16-20 times/day	4 <input type="checkbox"/> 26-30 lbs
5 <input type="checkbox"/> 0 hrs/day	10 <input type="checkbox"/> 8-10 hrs/day	10 <input type="checkbox"/> 8-10 hrs/day	5 <input type="checkbox"/> > 20 times/day	8 <input type="checkbox"/> ladders daily with weight	5 <input type="checkbox"/> > 20 times/day	5 <input type="checkbox"/> > 20 lbs

\_\_\_\_\_ points x 2 = \_\_\_\_\_ total points

#### Occupation Rating

#### Total Points

- Disabled 0
- Very light 1-20
- Light 21-40
- Moderate 41-60
- Heavy 61-80
- Very heavy > 80

## Physical Therapy Visit Timeline\*

Phase	Weeks Postoperative	Minimum # Visits	Maximum # Visits
1	1-2	2	4
2	3-4	2	4
3	5-6	1	2
4	7-8	1	2
5	9-12	1	2
6	13-26	2	3
Total		9	17

### \*Physician Notification

The physician will be notified if the patient (1) fails to meet the expected goals for each phase of the protocol, (2) has a persistent joint effusion, (3) develops a chronic pain syndrome, (4) has difficulty with ambulation, (5) has a limitation of knee motion or patellar mobility, or (6) develops other complications associated with osteotomy and fracture healing.

These problems could result in a modification of this protocol and necessitate further visits to the physical therapist.

**Discharge Criteria (If goals for sports and occupation place patient into different categories, use category with highest functional demand criteria. For symptoms, use Symptom Rating Form found on next page.)**

#### *Sports Activity Level I or Heavy/Very Heavy Occupational Rating\**

No pain, swelling, giving-way with level 10 on Symptom Rating Form

KT-2000 < 3 mm (I-N, 134 N, total A/P)

Biodex strength testing: quadriceps & hamstrings strength  $\geq 85\%$  of opposite limb

Function testing: 2 hop tests, limb symmetry  $\geq 85\%$

#### *Sports Activity Level II or Moderate Occupational Rating\**

No pain, swelling, giving-way with level 8 on Symptom Rating Form

KT-2000 < 3 mm (I-N, 134 N, total A/P)

Biodex strength testing: quadriceps & hamstrings strength  $\geq 80\%$  of opposite limb

Function testing: 2 hop tests, limb symmetry  $\geq 85\%$

#### *Sports Activity Level III or Light Occupational Rating*

No pain, swelling, giving-way with level 6 on Symptom Rating Form

KT-2000 3-5 mm (I-N, 134 N, total A/P)

Biodex strength testing: quadriceps & hamstrings strength  $\geq 70\%$  of opposite limb

Function testing: 2 hop tests, limb symmetry  $\geq 75\%$

#### *Sports Activity Level IV (ADL) or Very light Occupational Rating*

No pain, swelling, giving-way with level 4 on Symptom Rating Form

KT-2000 3-5 mm (I-N, 134 N, total A/P)

Biodex strength testing: quadriceps & hamstrings strength < 70% of opposite limb

Function testing: 2 hop tests, limb symmetry < 75%

\*patients desiring to return to sports or strenuous work activities may require 4-6 more physical therapy visits during postoperative weeks 25-52 for advanced neuromuscular, strength, and activity-specific training to prevent reinjury.

# Cincinnati Knee Rating System Symptom Rating Form

Scale	Description
10	Normal knee, able to do strenuous work/sports with jumping, hard pivoting
8	Able to do moderate work/sports with running, turning and twisting; symptoms with strenuous work/sports
6	Able to do light work/sports with no running, twisting or jumping; symptoms with moderate work/sports
4	Able to do activities of daily living alone; symptoms with light work/sports
2	Moderate symptoms (frequent, limiting) with activities of daily living
0	Severe symptoms (constant, not relieved) with activities of daily living

## 1. PAIN (circle one)

10 — 8 — 6 — 4 — 2 — 0

## 2. SWELLING (circle one)

10 — 8 — 6 — 4 — 2 — 0

## 3. PARTIAL GIVING-WAY (circle one) (partial knee collapse, no fall to the ground)

10 — 8 — 6 — 4 — 2 — 0

## 4. FULL GIVING-WAY (circle one) (knee collapse occurs with actual falling to the ground)

10 — 8 — 6 — 4 — 2 — 0

## Return to Activities Warning

Return to strenuous activities after major knee ligament surgery carries the definite risk of a repeat injury or the potential of compounding the original injury. These risks cannot always be scientifically assessed. Patients are warned to return to athletic activities carefully and to avoid any activity in which pain, swelling, or a feeling of instability is present.

## References

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## Cincinnati SportsMedicine and Orthopaedic Center Rehabilitation Protocol Summary for High Tibial Osteotomy

	Postoperative Weeks					Postop Months		
	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-12	4	5	6
<b>Brace:</b> Bledsoe, fracture	X	X	X	X	X			
<b>Range of motion minimum goals:</b> 0°-110° 0°-130° 0°-135°	X	X	X					
<b>Weight bearing:</b> None to toe touch 1/4 body weight 1/2 to 3/4 body weight Full	X	X	X	X				
<b>Patella mobilization</b>	X	X	X	X				
<b>Modalities:</b> Electrical muscle stimulation (EMS) Pain/edema management (cryotherapy)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Stretching:</b> Hamstring, gastroc-soleus, iliotibial band, quadriceps	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Strengthening:</b> Quad isometrics, straight leg raises, active knee extension Closed-chain: gait retraining, toe raises, wall sits, mini-squats Knee flexion hamstring curls (90°) Knee extension quads (90°-30°) Hip abduction-adduction, multi-hip Leg press (70°-10°)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Balance/proprioceptive training:</b> Weight-shifting, mini-trampoline, BAPS, KAT, plyometrics					X	X	X	X
<b>Conditioning:</b> UBE Bike (stationary) Aquatic program Swimming (kicking) Walking Stair climbing machine Ski machine		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Running:</b> straight								X
<b>Cutting:</b> lateral carioca, figure 8's								X
<b>Full sports</b>								X

BAPS = Biomechanical Ankle Platform System (Camp, Jackson, MI), KAT = Kinesthetic Awareness Trainer (Breg, Inc., Vista, CA), UBE = upper body ergometer.

**Cincinnati SportsMedicine and Orthopaedic Center Rehab Protocol: HTO**  
**Phase 1. Weeks 1-2 (Visits: 2-4)**

<b>General Observation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Non weight bearing</li> <li>■ Bledsoe or fracture brace 0°-90°</li> </ul>	
<b>Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Pain</li> <li>■ Hemarthrosis</li> <li>■ Patellar mobility</li> <li>■ ROM minimum</li> <li>■ Quadriceps contraction &amp; patella migration</li> <li>■ Soft tissue contracture</li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b>Goals</b></p> <p>Controlled Mild Good 0°-90° Good None</p>
<p><b>Frequency</b> 3-4 x/day 10 minutes</p> <p>3 x/day 15 minutes</p> <p>As required</p>	<p><b>Range of motion</b> ROM (0°-90°) Patella mobilization Ankle pumps (plantar flexion with resistance band) Hamstring, gastroc-soleus stretches</p> <p><b>Strengthening</b> Straight leg raises (flexion) Active quadriceps isometrics Knee extension (active-assisted, 90°-30°)</p> <p><b>Modalities</b> Electrical muscle stimulation Cryotherapy</p>	<p align="center"><b>Duration</b></p> <p>5 reps x 30 secs</p> <p>3 sets x 10 reps 1 set x 10 reps 3 sets x 10 reps</p> <p>20 minutes 20 minutes</p>
<b>Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ ROM 0°-90°</li> <li>■ Adequate quadriceps contraction</li> <li>■ Control inflammation, effusion</li> </ul>	

**Cincinnati SportsMedicine and Orthopaedic Center Rehab Protocol: HTO**  
**Phase 2. Weeks 3-4 (Visits: 2-4)**

<b>General Observation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ None to toe-touch weight bearing (week 4) per x-ray when:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pain controlled</li> <li>- Hemarthrosis controlled</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Voluntary quadriceps contraction achieved</li> </ul>	
<b>Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Pain</li> <li>■ Effusion</li> <li>■ Patellar mobility</li> <li>■ ROM minimum</li> <li>■ Quadriceps contraction &amp; patella migration</li> <li>■ Soft tissue contracture</li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b>Goals</b></p> Controlled Mild Good 0°-110° Good None
<p><b>Frequency</b>            3-4 x/day            10 minutes</p> <p>2-3 x/day            20 minutes</p> <p>2 x/day            10 minutes</p> <p>As required</p>	<p><b>Range of motion</b>            ROM (passive, 0°-110°)            Patella mobilization            Ankle pumps (plantar flexion with resistance band)            Hamstring, gastroc-soleus stretches</p> <p><b>Strengthening</b>            Straight leg raises (flexion, extension)            Isometric training: multi-angle (0°, 60°)            Knee extension (active-assisted, 90°-30°)</p> <p><b>Aerobic conditioning</b>            UBE</p> <p><b>Modalities</b>            Electrical muscle stimulation            Cryotherapy</p>	<p align="center"><b>Duration</b></p> <p>5 reps x 30 secs</p> <p>3 sets x 10 reps            1 set x 10 reps            3 sets x 10 reps</p> <p>20 minutes            20 minutes</p>
<b>Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ ROM 0°-110°</li> <li>■ Muscle control</li> <li>■ Control inflammation, effusion</li> <li>■ 25% weight bearing</li> </ul>	

**Cincinnati SportsMedicine and Orthopaedic Center Rehab Protocol: HTO**  
**Phase 3. Weeks 5-6 (Visits: 1-2)**

<b>General Observation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Partial (25%) weight bearing per x-ray when:</li> <li>- Pain controlled without narcotics    - Hemarthrosis controlled</li> <li>- ROM 0°-100°                                    - Muscle control throughout ROM</li> </ul>	
<b>Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Pain</li> <li>■ Effusion</li> <li>■ Patellar mobility</li> <li>■ ROM</li> <li>■ Muscle control</li> <li>■ Inflammatory response</li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b>Goals</b></p> <p>Mild/No RSD  Minimal  Good  0°-130°  3/5  None</p>
<p><b>Frequency</b>  3 x/day  10 minutes</p> <p>2 x/day  20 minutes</p> <p>2 x/day  10 minutes</p> <p>As required</p>	<p><b>Range of motion</b>  ROM (passive, 0°-130°)  Patella mobilization  Hamstring, gastroc-soleus stretches</p> <p><b>Strengthening</b>  Straight leg raises (ankle weight, not to exceed 10% of body weight)  Isometric training: multi-angle (90°, 60°, 30°)  Closed-chain  - Mini-squats  - Wall sits  Leg press (70°-10°)</p> <p><b>Aerobic conditioning</b> (patellofemoral precautions)  UBE  Stationary bicycling  Water walking</p> <p><b>Modalities</b>  Electrical muscle stimulation  Cryotherapy</p>	<p align="center"><b>Duration</b></p> <p>5 reps x 30 secs</p> <p>3 sets x 10 reps  2 sets x 10 reps  3 sets x 20 reps  to fatigue x 3</p> <p>3 sets x 10 reps</p> <p>20 minutes  20 minutes</p>
<b>Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ ROM 0°-130°</li> <li>■ Control inflammation, effusion</li> <li>■ Muscle control</li> <li>■ Early recognition complications</li> <li>■ 50% weight bearing</li> </ul>	

**Cincinnati SportsMedicine and Orthopaedic Center Rehab Protocol: HTO**  
**Phase 4. Weeks 7-8 (Visits: 1-2)**

<b>General Observation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Partial (50-75%) weight bearing per x-ray when:</li> <li>- Pain controlled                      - Hemarthrosis controlled</li> <li>- ROM 0°-120°                              - Voluntary quad contraction achieved</li> </ul>	
<b>Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Pain</li> <li>■ Effusion</li> <li>■ Patellar mobility</li> <li>■ ROM</li> <li>■ Muscle control</li> <li>■ Inflammatory response</li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b>Goals</b></p> <p>Mild/No RSD  Minimal  Good  0°-135°  4/5  None</p>
<p><b>Frequency</b>  2 x/day  10 minutes</p> <p>2 x/day  20 minutes</p> <p>1-2 x/day  15 minutes</p> <p>As required</p>	<p><b>Range of motion</b>  ROM (0°-135°)  Hamstring, gastroc-soleus stretches  Patella mobilization</p> <p><b>Strengthening</b>  Straight leg raises (flexion, extension, abduction, adduction)  Straight leg raises, rubber tubing  Hamstring curls (active, 0°-90°)  Knee extension (active, 90°-30°)  Leg press (70°-10°)  Closed-chain  - Wall sits  - Mini-squats (rubber tubing, 0°-30°)  Multi-hip machine (flexion, extension, abduction, adduction)</p> <p><b>Aerobic conditioning</b>  UBE  Stationary bicycling  Water walking</p> <p><b>Modalities</b>  Cryotherapy</p>	<p align="center"><b>Duration</b></p> <p>5 reps x 30 secs</p> <p>3 sets x 10 reps  3 sets x 30 reps  3 sets x 10 reps  3 sets x 10 reps  3 sets x 10 reps  3 sets x 20 reps  to fatigue x 3</p> <p>3 sets x 10 reps</p> <p>20 minutes</p>
<b>Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 50-75% weight bearing</li> <li>■ Muscle control</li> <li>■ Control inflammation, effusion</li> <li>■ ROM 0°-135°</li> </ul>	



**Cincinnati SportsMedicine and Orthopaedic Center Rehab Protocol: HTO**  
**Phase 6. Weeks 13-26 (Visits: 2-3)**

<b>General Observation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No effusion, painless ROM, joint stability</li> <li>■ Performs activities of daily living, can walk 20 minutes without pain</li> <li>■ ROM 0°-135°</li> </ul>	
<b>Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Pain</li> <li>■ Manual muscle test</li> <li>■ Swelling</li> <li>■ Patellar mobility</li> <li>■ Crepitus</li> <li>■ Gait</li> <li>■ Isometric test (mean avg. torque/% deficit quads, hams)</li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b>Goals</b></p> <p>Minimal/No RSD 4/5 Minimal Good None/slight Symmetrical 20-30</p>
<p><b>Frequency</b></p> <p>2 x/day 10 minutes</p> <p>2 x/day 20 minutes</p> <p>1-3 x/day 5 minutes</p> <p>3 x/week 20 minutes</p> <p>3 x/week 15-20 minutes</p> <p>As required</p>	<p><b>Range of motion</b> Hamstring, gastroc-soleus, quad, ITB stretches</p> <p><b>Strengthening</b> Straight leg raises, rubber tubing (high speed) Hamstring curls (active, 0°-90°) Knee extension with resistance (90°-30°) Leg press (70°-10°) Multi-hip machine (flexion, extension, abduction, adduction) Closed-chain: Mini-squats (rubber tubing, 0°-40°)</p> <p><b>Balance training</b> Balance board/2 legged Single leg stance</p> <p><b>Aerobic conditioning</b> (patellofemoral precautions) Stationary bicycling Water walking Swimming (kicking) Walking Stair machine (low resistance, low stroke) Ski machine (short stride, level, low resistance)</p> <p><b>Running program</b> (6 months, straight, unloader brace) Jog Walk Backward run</p> <p><b>Modalities</b> Cryotherapy</p>	<p align="center"><b>Duration</b></p> <p>5 reps x 30 secs</p> <p>3 sets x 30 reps 3 sets x 10 reps 3 sets x 10 reps 3 sets x 10 reps 3 sets x 10 reps 3 sets x 20 reps</p> <p>1/4 mile 1/8 mile 20 yards</p> <p>20 minutes</p>
<b>Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increase strength and endurance</li> </ul>	