

**PHYSICAL THERAPY PROTOCOL**  
**DIAGNOSIS: PATELLAR DISLOCATION**

- Weeks 1-2:
  - Hinged knee brace locked at 30° at all times except hygiene, WBAT in brace
  - Quad activation/isometrics, straight leg raises
  - Pain, swelling, inflammation control with modalities prn
  
- Weeks 3-4:
  - Hinged knee brace locked in maximal extension while weightbearing
    - OK to remove brace for non-weightbearing activities
  - Continued quad activation
    - Begin E-stim as needed
  - Range of motion
    - Begin AROM 0-90 as tolerated; no flexion past 90 until week 5
  
- Week 5-6
  - Brace
    - Discontinue hinged knee brace as tolerated based on gait pattern, quad control, and pain
    - Wear lateral patellar stabilizing brace at all times except hygiene and flexion ROM exercises
  - ROM
    - Gentle patellar mobilization exercises
    - PROM/AAROM/AROM – no limits
      - Emphasize full passive extension
      - Goal: Symmetric ROM by Week 7
    - Stationary bike (no resistance)
  - Strengthening
    - Quarter-squats (0-45) and heel raises
      - Progress to wall or ball squats as tolerated
    - Hip strengthening – specifically external rotators
    - Isotonic leg press (0 – 60 degrees)
    - Progressive SLR program with weights for quad strength with brace off if no extensor lag (otherwise keep brace on and locked)
    - Theraband standing terminal knee extension
    - Hamstring PRE's
  - Functional training
    - Proprioceptive training bilateral stance
    - Double leg balance on tilt boards
    - 4 inch step ups/downs

- Week 7-10
  - Precautions
    - Avoid valgus stress to knee, especially in full extension
  - Brace
    - Continue lateral patellar stabilizing brace during all activities/exercises except flexion ROM exercises; OK to remove at night
  - ROM
    - Unrestricted
  - Strengthening
    - Advance as tolerated
  - Functional training
    - 6 inch step ups/downs, advance as tolerated
    - Single leg proprioceptive training
    - Lateral step out with therabands
    - Retro treadmill progressive inclines; Stairmaster
    - Sportcord (bungee) walking
    - Increase resistance on stationary bike
  - Criteria to Progress (may progress to next phase prior to Week 11 if criteria met)
    - Normal ROM (equal to opposite knee)
    - Quad strength > 75% contralateral side
    - Functional hop test >70% contralateral side
    - Swelling < 1cm at joint line
    - No pain
    - Demonstrates good control on jump down
  
- Week 11+
  - Brace
    - Wear lateral stabilizing brace during activities; OK to remove for walking
  - Strengthening
    - Continue advanced strengthening program
  - Functional training
    - Begin running and activity-specific functional training program
  - Criteria to return to sports and to d/c lateral stabilizing brace
    - Full Active ROM
    - Quadriceps and hip external rotators strength >90% contralateral side
    - Satisfactory clinical exam
    - Functional hop tests >90% contralateral side