HaysMed

MCL Sprain (Grade I-II)

General Principles:
This protocol was designed to provide the rehabilitation professional with a guideline of care. It should be stressed that this is only a protocol and should not be a substitute for clinical decision making regarding a patient's progression. Actual progression should be individualized based upon your patient's physical examination, progress, and presence of any complications.

PHASE I (Immediate)

Week 1

Orthotics-
1. Knee Immobilizer until MCL-type functional hinged brace is available
2. Wear at all times for Week 1

Weight Bearing-
1. Progress weight bearing to full as tolerated.
2. Patient must have normal gait to discontinue crutches

Modalities (PRN)-
1. Electrical Stimulation
2. Compression and elevation for pain and edema control
3. Ice for 10-20 minutes post-activity

ROM-
1. Progress active and passive ROM to full as tolerated

Exercises-
1. Quad sets, Hamstring sets
2. Heel slides / Wall slides to progress ROM as tolerated
3. Prone Hangs, calf and hamstring stretching, heel prop to improve extension
4. Ankle pumps
5. Straight Leg Raises
    a. Flexion, extension, abduction
    b. NO adduction
6. Proprioceptive exercises (In brace) once weight bearing is full
7. May use Electrical stimulation if needed to assist with Quad firing

PHASE II (Strengthening)

Week 2 – 4

Orthotics-
1. MCL brace for all weight bearing activity and for exercise

Weight Bearing-
1. Should be full weight bearing with normal gait in brace

Modalities (PRN)-
1. Continue Phase 1 modalities as needed

(Cont'd weeks 2-4)

Exercises-

HaysMed

MCL Sprain (Grade I-II)

1. Progress Phase I exercises
2. Stationary Bike, Stair Stepper, or Elliptical runner
3. Closed-Chain exercises
    a. Shuttle / Leg Press
    b. Mini-Squats, Lunges, etc
4. Isotonic Open Chain exercises, progress resistance as tolerated
    a. Short Arc quads, progress to full-arc as tolerated
    b. Hamstring curls
    c. Hip flexion, extension, abduction, NO adduction
5. May progress to Isokinetic strengthening if full, pain-free ROM and tolerates Isotonic strengthening well
    a. 180 to 300 degrees per second
6. Aquatic exercise (refer to aquatic protocol)
7. May progress to running program when approved by Physician

PHASE III (Advanced Strengthening)

Week 5 – 8+

Orthotics-

1. May discontinue brace for daily activity
2. Continue use of MCL brace for rehabilitation, sport, and high-risk activity

Exercises-

1. Advance Phase II exercises as tolerated
2. Aggressive Isotonic strengthening
3. Initiate functional sport activity
    a. Bounding, Jumping, Plyometrics
    b. Interval Running or sports programs
    c. Progress to lateral sport movements and cutting activities
    d. DIME warmup
4. Criteria to be released for return to sport
    LE functional test (see protocol), per physician request (Goal: 90% of uninvolved leg)
    ***Please complete functional testing form and return to physician**

Revised 8/2026