

## CLINICAL COMMENTARY

POST OPERATIVE REHABILITATION OF GRADE III  
MEDIAL COLLATERAL LIGAMENT INJURIES: EVIDENCE  
BASED REHABILITATION AND RETURN TO PLAYCatherine A. Logan, MD, MBA, MSPT<sup>1</sup>Luke T. O'Brien, B.Phty, M.Phty, (Sports), SCS<sup>2</sup>Robert F. LaPrade MD, PhD<sup>3,4</sup>

## ABSTRACT

The medial collateral ligament is the most commonly injured ligament of the knee, with injury generally sustained in the athletic population as a result of valgus contact with or without tibial external rotation. The capacity of the medial collateral ligament to heal has been demonstrated in both laboratory and clinical studies; however, complete ruptures heal less consistently and may result in persistent instability. When operative intervention is deemed necessary, anatomical medial knee reconstruction is recommended. Post-operative rehabilitation focuses on early motion and the return of normal neuromuscular firing patterns with progression based on attainment of specific phase criteria and goals. The purpose of this clinical commentary is to discuss the determinants of phase progression and the importance of objectively assessing readiness for advancement that is consistent with post-operative healing. Additional tests and validated measures to assess readiness for sport are also presented.

**Key words:** Medial knee, medial collateral ligament, reconstruction, rehabilitation, return to sport, periodization.

**Level of Evidence:** 5

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I affirm that I have no financial affiliation (including research funding) or involvement with any commercial organization that has a direct financial interest in any matter included in this manuscript, except as disclosed in an attachment and cited in the manuscript. Any other conflict of interest (i.e., personal associations or involvement as a director, officer, or expert witness) is also disclosed in an attachment.

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