

Distal Femoral Osteotomy (DFO) Rehabilitation Protocol

	Weight-bearing	Brace	Range of Motion	Exercises
Phase 1 0-2 weeks	Heel touch only	Locked in full extension at all times Off for hygiene and home exercise only	Gentle passive 0-90°	Calf pumps, patellar mobilization, quadriceps tightening sets and SLR in brace
Phase 2 2-6 weeks	Heel touch only	2-8 weeks: Unlocked 0-90° and worn daytime only until 6 weeks Off at night for sleeping Discontinue brace at 6 weeks	Maintain full extension and progress to full flexion	Progress non-weight-bearing flexibility, modalities as needed Add side-lying hip and core, advance quad set and stretching Advance core work with hip, gluteal and core strengthening
Phase 3 6-8 weeks	Advance 25% weekly and progress to full with normalized gait pattern	None	Full	Progress closed chain activities. Advance hamstring exercises, proprioception & balance exercises, lunges & leg press Advance core work with hip, gluteal and core strengthening Begin Stationary Bike at 6 weeks
Phase 4 8-16 weeks	Full	None	Full	Progress Phase III exercises and functional activities: walking lunges, planks, bridges, Swiss ball, half-Bosu exercises Advance core work with hip, gluteal and core strengthening Add elliptical at 12 weeks and swimming permitted at 12 weeks.
Phase 5 4-6 months	Full	None	Full	Advance Phase 4 activities. Progress to functional training, including impact activity after 5 months when cleared by MD

CPM – continuous passive motion machine; SLR – Straight-leg raise;

Matthew A. Varacallo MD
Penn Highlands Healthcare – Orthopaedic Surgery & Sports Medicine
145 Hospital Avenue, Suite 301
DuBois, PA 15857
O: 814-375-6200
F: 814-375-6452