



# CARTILAGE RESTORATION:

## Rehabilitation

### WHAT TO EXPECT DURING RECOVERY

Talking to your doctor about recovery and rehabilitation after cartilage restoration surgery is important. This booklet will provide you with a better understanding of the typical recovery process and timeline. Please keep in mind that these are general guidelines and your recovery may differ depending on the unique circumstances of your procedure.

# RECOVERY

## HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE ME TO FULLY RECOVER FROM CARTILAGE RESTORATION SURGERY?

Restoration surgery includes the removal of damaged cartilage and bone from your knee with the implantation of healthy cartilage and bone tissue (osteochondral allograft). It takes time for the allograft to incorporate into the surrounding tissues to ensure that it functions as part of your joint. Healing of the graft is just the first step in recovery.

## WHEN CAN I BEAR WEIGHT ON MY LEG AFTER SURGERY?

When you can bear weight on your leg after surgery differs depending on the location in the joint the graft was placed and if additional procedures were performed at the time of the graft implantation. You may need to limit your weight-bearing for at least the first 6 weeks and then gradually begin to bear weight, within the care and direction of your physical therapist. Depending on where the allograft was placed, you may be allowed to bear weight soon after surgery.



It takes time for the allograft to incorporate into the surrounding tissues to ensure that it functions as part of your joint.

## **WILL I NEED A BRACE AFTER SURGERY AND FOR HOW LONG?**

Most likely a brace will be necessary after cartilage restoration surgery. Your doctor will determine the length of time you need to wear a brace and how much you can bend your knee according to your particular case.

## **WILL I NEED CRUTCHES AFTER SURGERY AND FOR HOW LONG?**

Yes, you should expect the need for crutches after cartilage restoration surgery. Your doctor will determine how long you need protected weight-bearing with crutches.

Most likely a brace will be necessary after cartilage restoration surgery.



## **WILL I NEED PHYSICAL THERAPY AFTER SURGERY AND FOR HOW LONG?**

Yes, rehabilitation after cartilage restoration is necessary to help you return to your activities of daily living and any sports. It is very important to work closely with your physical therapist following the procedure for several reasons. The therapist will help guide you through the process of moving and strengthening your leg while the osteochondral allograft is healing. Most patients will see a therapist once or twice a week until they have regained their full range of motion and strength. All patients will be required to do exercises on their own to ensure a full recovery. Patients wishing to return to sports will often continue with a therapist even after they return to activities of daily life.





Most patients will see a therapist once or twice a week until they have regained their full range of motion and strength.

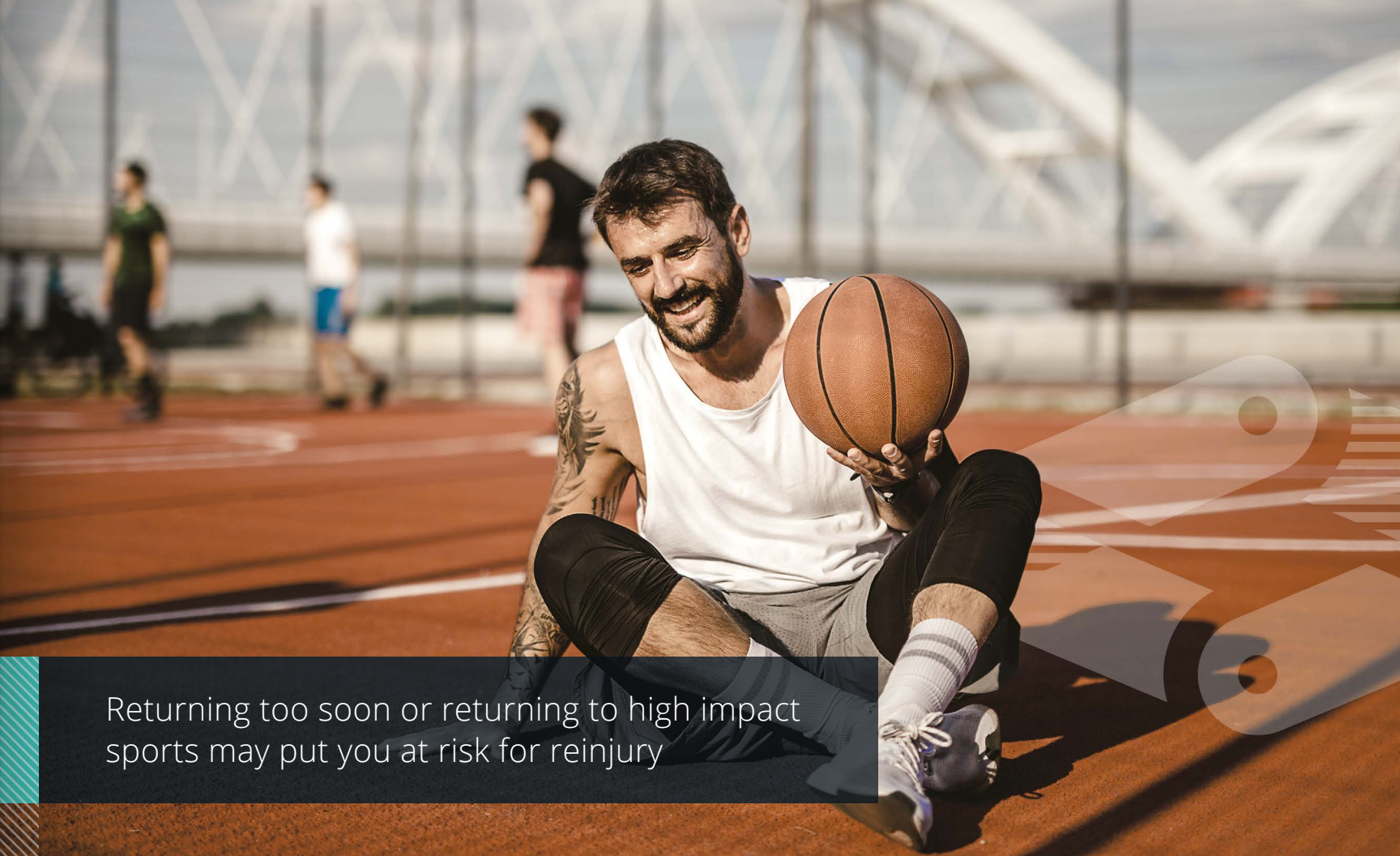
## **WHEN WILL I BE ABLE TO DRIVE A CAR AFTER SURGERY?**

The length of time before you can drive a car after surgery differs for each patient. You must conclude post-operative pain medication to consider driving. Before driving again, be sure to ask your doctor whether it is safe to do so.

## **WILL I BE ABLE TO RETURN TO SPORTS AFTER SURGERY AND HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE?**

Returning to sports after cartilage restoration surgery is the final step of recovery. Your therapist will work with you to help you regain full mobility and strength before you can consider returning to sports. On average, patients take 6 to 8 months to return. Returning too soon or returning to high impact sports may put you at risk for reinjury, so be sure to talk to your doctor about your sports activities and expectations regarding a return.





Returning too soon or returning to high impact sports may put you at risk for reinjury

# REHABILITATION GUIDELINES

The goal of rehabilitation is to restore the function of your leg as soon as possible without overloading the bone and cartilage allograft while it grows into your body. Speak with your doctor to learn more about their typical rehabilitation protocol following osteochondral allograft transplantation procedures.

## PHASE 1: GRAFT PROTECTION

Modified weight-bearing precautions per physician. Control pain and swelling and manage soft-tissue irritation. Start range-of-motion and muscle activation exercises consistent with weight-bearing precautions. Restore patella mobility. Reestablish quad control. Begin scar massage once incision is healed.

## PHASE 2: RETURN TO ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING

Progress to weight-bearing and independent ambulation. Establish full range of motion. Progress to closed chain and isotonic exercises. Transition from non-weight-bearing cardio to weight bearing. Focus on functional movement and activity.

### **PHASE 3: RETURN TO ACTIVE LIFESTYLE**

Advanced strengthening, core stabilization and balance/uneven surface training, single-leg exercise progressions, introduction to agilities, plyometrics, and interval programs. Start gradual return to sport-specific training.

### **PHASE 4: ATHLETIC AND SPORTS PARTICIPATION**

Continue strengthening and proprioceptive exercises. Continue with interval programs and incorporate more multi-plane movements for agilities and plyometrics. Continue return-to-sports training. The typical progression for sports or high-demand recreational activity will be non-contact > limited practice > full practice > play. Return to sports is different for each patient and talking your situation over with your doctor and therapist is recommended before you participate.

# THE JRF ORTHO DIFFERENCE

At JRF Ortho, it's not enough to do it the same as the next guy. Our goal is to do one better by providing innovative solutions, the best products in the industry, and superior customer care.

We know that patients with musculoskeletal conditions are seeking to go further, or faster than they can presently. Like us, they are looking to go beyond today to what is possible tomorrow.

► **Our mission is to improve quality of life through innovative solutions for allograft joint repair.**

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- Patient Resources: [jrfortho.org/resources/patients](https://jrfortho.org/resources/patients)
- Fresh Osteochondral Allografts: [jrfortho.org/products/category/osteochondral-allografts](https://jrfortho.org/products/category/osteochondral-allografts)



LEARN MORE