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Physical Therapy Lateral Ankle Sprain – Grade III Non-Operative protocol

Phase I- Maximum Protection (Weeks 0 to 4 as directed by the physician):

- Ice and modalities to reduce pain and inflammation
- Compression wrap to reduce swelling
- Crutches as instructed
- Elevate the ankle above the heart
- Begin active range of motion all planes as directed by physician
- Stationary bike and pool program as directed by physician

Phase II- Progressive Range of Motion and Early Strengthening (4 weeks):

- Continue with modalities to reduce swelling and control pain
- Wean off crutches as instructed
- Continue with active range of motion with light terminal stretching
- Begin 4 plane ankle TB
- Foot intrinsic strengthening
- Begin closed chain progression bilateral progressing to unilateral (squats, calf raises, toe raises)
- Proprioception drills
- Bike, elliptical, treadmill walking
- May begin shallow water pool jogging

Phase III- Progressive Strengthening (Weeks 6):

- Continue with modalities to reduce swelling
- Restore full range of motion all planes
- Continue with open and closed chain ankle and foot intrinsic strengthening
- Progress difficulty of proprioception drills
- Increase intensity of pool running

Phase IV- Advanced Strengthening – Return to Sports (Weeks 8-12):

- Continue with modalities as needed
- Continue with end range stretching
- Progress strengthening and proprioception
- Begin dry land running. Advance to sprinting and agility drills as tolerated. May need brace or tape.
- Simulate return to sport activity with field or court drills
- Must demonstrate a negative clinical exam and pass a strength and agility test with greater than 90% efficiency for physician release.