

# Unilateral Transfemoral Amputation and Knee Disarticulation Rehabilitation Guidelines

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**Note:** This document serves as a guideline for post-operative rehabilitation and should be executed in combination with sound clinical judgment and reasoning to ensure patient safety and optimize long term function. If any

concerns and/or complications arise regarding the progress of any patient, Physical Therapy and Prosthetics providers must contact the attending Orthopedic Surgeon and/or Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation specialists assigned to the patient's case. Progression to the next phase along the course of rehabilitation care should be determined by the surgical and rehabilitation team's guidance with continual evaluation of clinical criteria to include but not limited to: bone/soft tissue healing status, achievement of functional milestones, pain levels, and/or concurrent medical conditions.

### **Types of TFA and Secondary Procedures**

- Transfemoral myodesis – Adductor magnus is secured to the lateral aspect of the femur and the distal hamstring is secured to the anterior aspect of the femur
- Knee Disarticulation – Patella tendon is sutured into ACL during amputation
- AMI – (Agonist antagonist Myoneural Interface) - Comprises a surgical construct and neural control architecture designed to serve as a bidirectional interface
- TMR (Targeted Muscle Reinnervation) - Severed motor nerves are surgically transferred to the motor points of denervated *target* muscles, which, after reinnervation, contract in response to neural control signals for the missing limb
- RPNI (Regenerative Peripheral Nerve Interfaces) - constructed by excising the nerve and wrapping the proximal nerve end with a small free muscle graft

### **Suggested Outcomes Metrics (Choosing a minimum of 2-3)**

- Amputee Mobility Predictor (AMPnoPRO or AMP-Bilateral)
- Timed Up and Go (TUG) or Component Timed Up and Go (c-TUG)
- L-Test
- 2 Minute Walk Test or 6 Minute Walk Test
- Four Square Step Test
- Timed Stair Accent
- Comprehensive High-Level Activity Mobility Predictor
- Prosthetic Limb Users Survey of Mobility (PLUS-M)
- Trinity Amputation and Prosthesis Experience Scale (TAPES)

### **Pre-Operative Guidelines**

- Strengthening exercises to improve muscle tone and function
- Strive for full/functional residual limb active/passive range of motion values
- Improve cardiovascular fitness
- Optimize medical management of any existing concurrent medical conditions
- Optimize unilateral balance/proprioceptive training
- Promote wellness, proper nutrition, tobacco cessation, and an optimal body weight
- Educate patient on post-operative rehabilitation requirements to ensure an optimal functional outcome
- Validate behavioral health and family support program is in place
- Facilitate identification of any necessary assistive devices and/or durable medical equipment for procurement, use, and training if clinically indicated prior to surgery
- Implement Vitamin D and Calcium supplementation, as per surgeon's recommendation

### **Goals:**

- Achieve maximal hip ROM with emphasis on hip extension
- Begin core/LE strength training with emphasis on hip extension/ hip abduction strength

### **Protective Healing (Week 1-2)**

- Non weight bearing status of residual limb x 4-6 weeks post-op

- It is important to maintain hip extension, complete prone lying multiple times a day
- Avoid shear stress and protect incision site
- Per physicians recommendation, patient can be fit with a shrinker or use figure 8 wrapping for swelling management and shaping of the residual limb (timeline and wear schedule may vary per physician)
- Range of motion as tolerated (focus on maintaining pre surgical hip extension ROM)
- Bed mobility
- Transfer and appropriate assistive device training
- Gait training (non-weight bearing on operative side)
- Wheelchair mobility training
- Aerobic conditioning (ex: arm ergometer/rower)
- Core and limb strengthening (ex: mat ther ex to include CKC bolster)
- Neuromuscular re-education (ex: seated and standing balance activities)
- Begin desensitization and mirror therapy for phantom limb and neuropathic pain
- Monitor symptom responses for 24-48 hours after each exercise session. Pain should settle quickly post exercise with no significant increase in symptoms the next day (see pain monitoring model below)

### **Goals:**

- Pain control, functional mobility
- Protection of residual limb
- Achieve hip extension to ~10 degree
- Normalize pelvic coordination

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### **Pre-prosthetic Training (Weeks 2-8)**

- Wound monitoring and assist with dressing changes as needed
- Maintain/improve hip ROM
- Continue appropriate previous exercises with increased resistance and/or difficulty
- Core strengthening exercises
- Gait training on even and uneven surfaces with appropriate assisted device maintaining non-weight bearing status on amputee limb
- Suture removal depending on wound healing and surgeon preference (typically 2 weeks post op)
- Liner fitting once cleared by ortho, establish wear schedule (i.e. liner during the day and shrinker at night)
- Once incision site is fully healed begin scar mobilization
- Fall recovery training

### **Milestone:**

- Tolerate liner wear 8 hours a day without skin issues
- Hip extension ~10 degree
- Ambulate at a modified independence level with appropriate assisted device

### **Prosthetic Training**

- Socket fit typically occurs around 4-6 weeks post op to allow for adequate tissue healing
- Educate on prosthetic wearing schedule, skin inspection, management of limb volume changes, use of different ply socks, prosthetic fit, and hygiene instructions
- Gradually increase prosthesis wear time starting at 15 min interval and increasing as tolerated with frequent skin checks

- Balance activities (ex: step up, playing catch, rebounder with a weight ball, compliant surfaces, balance beam, etc.)
- Activities that master control of prosthetic knee flexion and extension to optimize confidence in stability
- Gait activities (ex: weight shifts, step ups, hurdles, level surfaces, ramps, curbs, stairs, grass, car transfers, etc.) focusing on equalizing step length, stance time, upright posture, equal reciprocal arm swing
- Fall recovery training

**Milestones:**

- Wear prosthesis around 8 hours a day without any skin issues
- Full hip ROM
- 5/5 MMT strength for hip
- Score of ~30 on single leg bridge test (with 8 inch towel roll)
- Demonstrate fall recovery procedures training and floor to stand transfers
- Ambulate with modified independence with minimal gait deviations on level and unlevel surfaces over 1000ft
- Ascend and descend 4 steps with least restrictive device and modified independence
- AMPPRO scores (normative values, see CPG): K0/K1 25±7; K2 35±7; K3 41±4; K4 45±2
- 2 MWT or 6 MWT consistent with age rated normative values

**Recommended criteria for return to run programming**

- No earlier than 4-6 months post amputation
- DEXA scan at the discretion of the physician
- Wear prosthesis throughout the day without skin break down
- Walk a mile without an assistive device
- Score of ~40 on single leg bridge test (with 8 inch towel roll)
- Single leg stance greater than 3-6 seconds
- Single leg step up on residual limb x10 on 6 inch step without UE support
- AMPPRO ≥ K3

## MONITORING PAIN AND LOAD RESPONSE

Pain during exercise  
0 = no pain 10 = worse pain imaginable



Adapted from Thommeé (1997) and Silbernagel (2007)

Monitor symptoms response for 24-48 hours post exercise.  
Pain should settle quickly post exercise with no increase in symptoms the next day.

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