

# LCL Injury Exercises Handout

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This exercise program is designed to guide you through a series of exercises aimed at alleviating pain, improving function, and promoting healing in the affected area. By following these exercises regularly, you can speed up your recovery and reduce the risk of further injury.

## Purpose of the program

The purpose of this exercise program is to:

- Stretch and strengthen the muscles and ligaments around your knee
  - Promote healing and improve resistance to repetitive stress
  - Enhance muscle endurance and flexibility
  - Enable you to return to daily activities, sports, and recreational pastimes with reduced discomfort
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## Knee flexion with heel slide

1. Lie on your back with your knees bent.
2. Slide your heel back by bending your affected knee as far as you can. Then hook your other foot around your ankle to help pull your heel even farther back.
3. Hold for about 6 seconds, then rest for up to 10 seconds.
4. Repeat 8 to 12 times.

## Heel slides on a wall

1. Lie on the floor close enough to a wall so that you can place both legs up on the wall. Your hips should be as close to the wall as is comfortable for you.
2. Start with both feet resting on the wall. Slowly let the foot of your affected leg slide down the wall until you feel a stretch in your knee.
3. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds.
4. Then slowly slide your foot up to where you started.
5. Repeat 2 to 4 times.

## Quad sets

1. Sit with your affected leg straight and supported on the floor or a firm bed. Place a small, rolled-up towel under your knee. Your other leg should be bent, with that foot flat on the floor.
2. Tighten the thigh muscles of your affected leg by pressing the back of your knee down into the towel.
3. Hold for about 6 seconds, then rest for up to 10 seconds.
4. Repeat 8 to 12 times.

## **Short-arc quad**

1. Lie on your back with your knees bent over a foam roll or a large rolled-up towel.
2. Lift the lower part of your affected leg and straighten your knee by tightening your thigh muscle. Keep the bottom of your knee on the foam roll or rolled-up towel.
3. Hold your knee straight for about 6 seconds, then slowly bend your knee and lower your leg back to the floor. Rest for up to 10 seconds between repetitions.
4. Repeat 8 to 12 times.

## **Straight-leg raises to the front**

1. Lie on your back with your good knee bent so that your foot rests flat on the floor. Your affected leg should be straight. Make sure that your low back has a normal curve. You should be able to slip your hand in between the floor and the small of your back, with your palm touching the floor and your back touching the back of your hand.
2. Tighten the thigh muscles in your affected leg by pressing the back of your knee flat down to the floor. Hold your knee straight.
3. Keeping the thigh muscles tight and your leg straight, lift your affected leg up so that your heel is about 30 centimetres off the floor. Hold for about 6 seconds, then lower slowly.
4. Relax for up to 10 seconds between repetitions.
5. Repeat 8 to 12 times.

## **Hamstring set (heel dig)**

1. Sit with your affected leg bent. Your good leg should be straight and supported on the floor.
2. Tighten the muscles on the back of your bent leg (hamstring) by pressing your heel into the floor.
3. Hold for about 6 seconds, then rest for up to 10 seconds.
4. Repeat 8 to 12 times.

## **Hip adduction**

You will need a pillow for this exercise.

1. Sit on the floor with your knees bent.
2. Place a pillow between your knees.
3. Put your hands slightly behind your hips for support.
4. Squeeze the pillow by tightening the muscles on the inside of your thighs.
5. Hold for 6 seconds, then rest for up to 10 seconds.
6. Repeat 8 to 12 times.

## Hip abduction

You will need a small pillow for this exercise.

1. Sit on the floor with your affected knee close to a wall.
2. Bend your affected knee but keep the other leg straight in front of you.
3. Place a pillow between the outside of your knee and the wall.
4. Put your hands slightly behind your hips for support.
5. Push the outside of your knee against the pillow and the wall.
6. Hold for 6 seconds, then rest for up to 10 seconds.
7. Repeat 8 to 12 times.

## Lateral step-up

1. Stand sideways on the bottom step of a staircase with your injured leg on the step and your other foot on the floor. Hold on to the banister or wall.
2. Use your injured leg to raise yourself up, bringing your other foot level with the stair step. Make sure to keep your hips level as you do this. And try to keep your knee moving in a straight line with your middle toe. Do not put the foot you are raising on the stair step.
3. Slowly lower your foot back down.
4. Repeat 8 to 12 times.

## Wall squat with ball

1. Stand with your back facing a wall. Place your feet about shoulder-width apart.
2. Place the exercise ball between your middle back and the wall. Move your feet out in front of you so they are about a foot in front of your hips. Tighten your belly muscles by pulling your belly button in toward your spine.
3. Slowly squat down as if you are going to sit in a chair, rolling your back over the ball as you squat. The ball should move with you but stay pressed into the wall.
4. Be sure that your knees do not go in front of your toes as you squat.
5. Hold for about 6 seconds.
6. Slowly rise to your standing position.
7. Repeat 8 to 12 times.

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## Reference

Healthwise Staff. (2023, July). *Lateral collateral ligament sprain: rehab exercises*. Alberta. <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Health/aftercareinformation/pages/conditions.aspx?hwid=zp4483>