



RETURN TO GOLF

GOAL:

To lower your handicap while rehabilitating your knee.

PROCESS:

Most golfers actually play better after a knee or shoulder injury. Want to guess why? Simply because they slow down their swing! Although I talk about getting some coaching in my other sports programs, nowhere is it as important as when returning to golf. Get a lesson! Use the bad luck of knee surgery to improve your golf game.

You should have been swinging your 5 or 7 iron inside days after surgery while trying to model Tiger. In other words, don't practice your same crummy swing- make some adjustments! If you haven't been handling your clubs, spend a few days doing this before hitting real balls. You can perform each Level of the "Return to Golf" program 3-4 days per week alternating with "soft workouts" on the other days. You probably need to spend 2 weeks to perfect your technique at each Level (though it may seem painfully slow, this is not the time to rush). If you have pain or swelling: RICE, and back down one level until the swelling resolves.

Upper body and "core" exercises are crucial for golfers. Besides the lesson, taking a Pilates class is probably the best thing you can do to improve your game.

LEVEL A:

PURPOSE	A slower swing. Understanding greens.	
PROTOCOL	Activity Warm-up. Stretch including legs, back, shoulders. Skills: 5 Irons off tees. Easy, 3/4 swing. Hit 20-30 balls. Putting.	Time 20 min 20 min. Total = 40 min.
COMMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Get a good stretch of not just your knee but shoulders and back before and after hitting balls.• Pay attention to your weight shift. You are swinging slow enough that you should <i>feel</i> exactly where you are.• Ice the knee afterwards.	

LEVEL B:

PURPOSE	Feeling your hips and hands. Balanced stance.	
PROTOCOL	<p style="text-align: center;">Activity</p> Warm-up legs, shoulders, and back. Skills: Easy 3/4 swings with 4 through 9 irons. Use up to 100 balls. More Putting.	<p style="text-align: center;">Time</p> 75 min. 15 min. Total = 90 min.
COMMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue using a 3/4 swing. • Focus on striking the ball – no muscling. • Stretch during, stretch and ice afterwards. 	

LEVEL C:

PURPOSE	Channeling Babe Diedrickson. Smelling Azaleas.	
PROTOCOL	<p style="text-align: center;">Activity</p> Warm-up, full stretch. Skills: Full swings with 4 through 9 irons. Use up to 100 balls. Add woods after 2 weeks of irons. (Use breathing and flow – not strength.) Putting.	<p style="text-align: center;">Time</p> 75 min. 15 min. Total = 90 min.
COMMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are those lessons going? • Full swing but still slow (think metronome). • Hit the ball to feel good, not to beat your partner. • Keep your neck and shoulders relaxed. • Don't rush. • Stretch and ice afterwards. 	

RETURN TO COMPETITION:

The next objective and beyond is to get back on the course with a better game. Remember, you are rehabilitating your knee – not actually playing golf. Ergo, winter rules: 1) If it lands in a gully, take a drop. 2) Use a cart for the first weeks, and, 3) most importantly, do not keep score! Use this time to find out why you like golf – the fresh air, the companionship, the good cigars, the beautiful vistas. Let your game improve with *deliberate practice*. Start with one good shot per hole and move on from there.