NONSURGICAL ORTHOPEDICS — KEY WEST CONCIERGE ORTHOPEDICS

Meniscus Tear

Diagnosis Explanation:

A **meniscus tear** is an injury to the **cartilage in the knee** that cushions and stabilizes the joint. It often occurs from **twisting, pivoting, or sudden stops**, common in sports or activities requiring knee rotation. Symptoms include **pain, swelling, stiffness, clicking or locking of the knee, and difficulty fully straightening the leg**. Severity is classified as:

- **Minor (Small Tear):** Mild pain, swelling, improves with rest.
- **Moderate (Partial Tear):** Pain with activity, occasional knee locking.
- **Severe (Large or Flap Tear):** Persistent pain, catching or locking sensation, possible need for surgery.

Specific Work Modifications:

- **If your job requires standing or walking:** Use a **knee brace** for support and take seated breaks.
- **If your job involves lifting:** Avoid deep knee bending and twisting motions.
- **If your job is desk-based:** Keep your knee **elevated** when sitting, and perform gentle mobility exercises throughout the day.
- **Avoid:** Deep squatting, kneeling, excessive stair climbing, and activities that put rotational stress on the knee.

Specific Activity Modifications:

- **If you run or play sports:** Reduce high-impact activities and switch to **low-impact options** like swimming or cycling.
- **If you hike:** Use **trekking poles**, avoid steep inclines, and stick to flat terrain.
- **If you do weightlifting:** Avoid **deep squats, lunges, and leg presses** until pain-free. Focus on **controlled, low-impact movements**.
- **Avoid:** Jumping, pivoting, sharp turns, and repetitive deep bending until fully healed.

Recommended Supplements:

- **Collagen Peptides** - 10g daily for cartilage repair.
- **Glucosamine & Chondroitin** - 1500mg/1200mg daily for joint support.
- **Omega-3 Fatty Acids** - 1000mg daily to reduce inflammation.
- **Turmeric (Curcumin)** - 500-1000mg daily for pain relief.
- **Vitamin C** - 500mg daily to enhance collagen synthesis.

Recommended Nutrition and Hydration:

- **Increase Omega-3 Intake** (salmon, walnuts, flaxseeds) to reduce joint inflammation.
- **Consume Collagen-Rich Foods** (bone broth, citrus, tomatoes) to support cartilage healing.
- **Eat Anti-Inflammatory Foods** (leafy greens, berries, nuts, turmeric) to reduce swelling.
- **Limit Processed Foods & Sugars** to prevent inflammation.
- **Hydration:** Drink **8-10 cups of water daily** to maintain joint lubrication.

Home Exercise Prescription:

Early Phase (0-2 Weeks, Reducing Pain & Swelling):

- **RICE Protocol** - Rest, Ice (15-20 min, 3x/day), Compression (brace as prescribed), Elevation.
- **Quadriceps Sets** - Tighten thigh muscle, hold for 5 seconds, repeat **10 reps, 3x/day**.
- **Ankle Pumps** - Move ankle up and down to improve circulation, **10 reps, 3x/day**.
- **Heel Slides** - Gently slide heel toward buttocks to improve mobility, **10 reps, 2x/day**.

Strengthening Phase (2-6 Weeks, Once Pain Decreases):

- **Straight Leg Raises** - Keep knee straight, lift leg, hold for 5 seconds, repeat **10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **Seated Knee Extensions** - Extend knee while seated, hold for 5 seconds, repeat **10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **Glute Bridges** - Lie on your back, lift hips while keeping hamstrings relaxed, **10 reps, 2x/day**.

Advanced Phase (6+ Weeks, Stability & Return to Activity):

- **Mini Squats (No Deep Bending)** - Slight knee bends while keeping weight on heels, **10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **Step-Ups** - Step onto a low platform, push through the heel, repeat **10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **Stationary Cycling** - Low resistance for **10-15 minutes/day**.
- **Balance Exercises** - Stand on injured leg for **10-20 seconds**, increase as tolerated.

Helpful Books:

1. *The Knee Injury Bible: Everything You Need to Know About Knee Pain, Prevention, and Treatment* - Kevin R. Stone, MD.
2. *Heal Your Knees: How to Prevent Knee Surgery and What to Do If You Need It* - Robert Klapper, MD, and Lynda Huey.

Contact Key West Concierge Orthopedics to reach out to Dr. Jason Pirozzolo or schedule a Concierge Care without the Concierge Fee™ appointment. Check out Nonsurgicalorthopedics.com and TopOrthoDocs.com to continue your research.