

Criteria to initiate program:

* Proper alignment and eccentric control with bilateral and unilateral closed chain movements.
* Complete 4 week return to jogging program to build aerobic base to prepare for more intense runs. Athlete should be able to jog for 10 consecutive minutes prior to starting program. Goal is not speed or distance when jogging 10 minutes but having a solid aerobic foundation to build upon.
* Single leg single hop test and single leg press >70% on Limb Symmetry Index.

Key notes:

* Perform program on every other day basis to allow for 24-48 hours of recovery time.
* Perform each level for 2-3 sessions before moving on to next level- move to next level once able to complete with proper mechanics, good strength, and without symptoms.
* Brace on when prescribed by MD.
* Athletes will progress at different rates through the program dependent upon confidence, degree of inflammation, severity of injury, age, and type of surgical intervention. Pain and swelling are the best guides to determining tolerance at each phase and whether an athlete should progress to the next step.
* Setbacks are common during return to sport progressions and sound judgment should be used regarding an extra rest day(s) or regressing back to prior phase if pain and swelling are problematic.
* Continue with lower extremity and core strengthening exercises 2-3 times a week while progressing program- strengthening exercises may overlap days of skiing program and be performed after skiing; however, must have one complete rest day per week.
* Active warm-up to initiate each session with cooldown following. Ice for 10-15 minutes following session as pain and swelling dictate.

Active warm-up

Pre-running drills (15 yards down and back each): jogging, skipping, side shuffle, backpedal, high knees, butt kicks, grapevine

Dynamic stretching routine to upper extremity, trunk, and lower extremity (10 yards down and back each): single leg RDL, quad stretch, side lunge, forward lunge, reverse lunge, knee tucks, glute stretch, inchworms, arm swings

Cool down

 5-10 minutes global upper extremity, trunk, and lower extremity stretching

Ice for 10-15 minutes as pain and swelling dictates

Phase I: Basic Skills and Introduction to Downhill

Start with ½ day gradually working up to ¾ day as tolerated. Goal is to regain confidence, strength and endurance before progressing to the greens.

* Side stepping up mountain 3 x 20 steps in each direction
* French fry with pizza stop to return for next pass
* Beginner hill working on turning and stopping mechanics

Phase II: Groomed, Easy Terrain on Greens

Start with ½ day gradually working up to full day as tolerated (break half way through for lunch/hydration). Progress as confidence, pain, strength, and endurance allows. Perform Phase II 2-4 ski days before progressing to Phase III.

Phase III: Groomed Greens/Blues with Progresssively Challenging Terrain

Able to perform full day with lunch and rest intervals as needed. May perform back to back days with max of 4 ski days/week. Progressively increase intensity with speed and turns. Perform Phase III for 4-6 weeks before progressing to Phase IV.

Phase IV: Unlimited Skiing and Return to Competitive Skiing

Full day with lunch and rest breaks. May begin working on technical aspects of ski event with their coach if applicable. Progressively build up strength and tolerance with more challenging terrain.