



Postoperative Instructions for Achilles Tendon Repair

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PAIN:

- You will be sent home from the surgery center with prescriptions for pain medication.
- Start the oral medication before your nerve block or local anesthetic wears off.
- Take the pain medication as prescribed; but as the pain lessens, you may decrease the frequency with which you take the medication.
- Remember, the medications are not necessarily meant to completely eliminate your pain, only to make it more bearable.
- It is also helpful to use ice, as well as to elevate your operative extremity, to decrease pain and swelling. If these measures are not adequately controlling your pain, please call our office. If it is after hours, you will speak to the physician on call.
- Most pain medications need a handwritten prescription for refills and cannot be obtained after hours or on the weekends. Please plan accordingly.
- Narcotic pain medications can cause constipation; you may wish to use an over-the-counter stool softener to help prevent this.

DRESSINGS:

- You will be placed into a splint before you leave the operating room. This is meant to absorb any leaking blood or fluid, to protect from infection, and to support your joint and limit motion.
- Your leg should remain in the splint and surgical dressings at all times, including sleeping and bathing, until you return to the office for your follow-up appointment.
- Be careful not to get your dressing wet.
- You will be non-weight bearing on the operative leg, with the assistance of crutches or a rolling knee walker.

DRIVING:

- You may not drive while you are taking pain medications.
- Once you have discontinued the pain medications, your doctor will let you know when it is safe to drive, depending on which leg is affected.

WHEN TO CALL:

- Please call if you develop a fever greater than 102°F, increasing pain that is not responding to pain medication, redness, increased swelling, persistent bleeding or drainage, or drainage other than clear fluid or blood.
- During normal business hours, you may call Erin, Physician Assistant, at 952-442-0136 for clinic questions or concerns, or Michelle, Care Coordinator, at 952-314-0778 for administrative or paperwork questions.
- If it is after hours, you may call 952-442-2163 and the answering service will contact the physician on call.

AFTER SURGERY - 7-14 DAYS POST-OP:

- You will have your first office visit.
- Your splint will be removed and sutures or staples will be taken out at this visit.
- You will be placed into a cast and will continue to be non-weight bearing on the operative leg.

AFTER SURGERY - 4 WEEKS POST-OP:

- You will be transitioned into a removable CAM boot and will begin physical therapy shortly after this visit to work on gentle range of motion.
- You will be able to begin partial weight bearing with the boot in place.

AFTER SURGERY - 6-8 WEEKS POST-OP:

- With the guidance of your therapist, you will progress from partial to full weight bearing.
- In time, you will be gradually weaned out of the boot, and return to wearing normal shoes.
- Sometimes you are given another ankle brace to wear for a little extra support.

AFTER SURGERY - 3 MONTHS POST-OP:

- You will likely be finishing physical therapy around this time.
- It is still important to avoid explosive, pushing-off type activities like sprinting and jumping.

AFTER SURGERY - 4-6 MONTHS POST-OP:

- You will have your final office visit.
- If things have progressed as expected, you will likely be able to resume all activities as tolerated.
- You will not need any type of brace to play sports or exercise.