



## Achilles Tendon Rupture Non-Surgically Treated

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### PHASE I – IMMEDIATE POST OPERATIVE PHASE (WEEK 0-2):

- Goals
  - Protection of injured tendon
- Weight Bearing
  - Weight-bearing as tolerated in CAM boot with 3 heel lifts with use of crutches as needed
  - Allowed to remove CAM boot for hygiene. When boot is removed, no weight-bearing or dorsiflexion (bending the ankle back) is allowed. This may cause damage to the healing tendon.
  - CAM boot should be worn when sleeping
- Exercises- done at home while wearing the boot
  - Toe flexion/extension (3x20 repetitions, once per hour)

### PHASE II – PROTECTION PHASE (WEEK 2-4):

- Goals
  - Protection of healing tendon
- Walker brace (boot) with 2 heel wedges
  - Wear boot while sleeping
  - Allowed to remove boot for washing and airing the foot. When boot is removed, no weight bearing or dorsiflexion of foot is allowed.
- Weight Bearing
  - As tolerated in boot
  - Use of crutches as needed
- Exercise program
  - Home exercises
  - Performed while wearing boot
  - Isometric submaximal plantar flexion (5x5 seconds, once per hour)
  - Toe exercises (flexion/extension, once per hour)

### WEEK 4-6:

- Goals
  - Protection of healing tendon
- Walker brace (boot) with 1 heel wedge
  - Wear boot while sleeping

- Allowed to remove boot for washing and airing the foot. When boot is removed, no weight bearing or dorsiflexion of foot is allowed.
- Weight Bearing
  - As tolerated in boot
  - Use of crutches as needed
- Exercise program
  - Home exercises as above, may increase intensity

### WEEK 6-8:

- Walker brace (boot) with no heel wedge
  - Full weight-bearing
  - Allowed to remove boot for washing and airing the foot. When boot is removed, no weight bearing or dorsiflexion of foot is allowed.
- Exercise program
  - Home exercises as above, may increase intensity

### WEEK 8-12:

- Visit orthopedic surgeon
- Walker brace (boot)
  - Wean out of boot
  - Use shoes with a heel lift until 14 weeks after surgery
- Physical Therapy (2x per week)
  - Exercise bike
  - AROM to 0 degrees plantarflexion
  - Active plantar flexion in cable machine (ROM as above)
  - Sitting heel-rise – with weight
  - Supination/pronation exercises with rubber band
  - Gait training and balance exercises
  - Squats (fitness ball behind back)
  - Other hip/knee exercises with no ankle involvement
  - Leg press
  - Other hip/knee exercises with no ankle involvement

### WEEK 12-14:

- Use of shoes with heel-lift until 14 weeks after surgery
- Use of regular shoes after 12 weeks, barefoot after 14 weeks
- Home exercises
  - As above
  - Walking 20 min per day
- Physical Therapy (2x per week)
  - As above, increase intensity
  - Balance exercises
  - Standing heel-rise on 2 legs, progress gradually to 1 leg

## WEEK 14-16:

- Home exercises
  - As above
- Physical Therapy (2x per week)
  - Intensify exercises by increasing load
  - Increase load gradually from 2 leg standing heel-rises to 1 leg
  - Both concentric and eccentric
  - Quick rebounding heel-rises
  - Gentle jogging
  - Start with 2-legged jumps, gradually increase

## WEEK 16+:

- Visit orthopedic surgeon
- Running outdoors (if good technique)
- Return to sports at earliest after 16 weeks (non-contact) and 20 weeks (contact)