

ACHILLES TENDON REPAIR POST-OPERATIVE PROTOCOL

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PHASE I (0-2 WEEKS): COMPLETE PROTECTION

- Non-weight bearing in post-operative splint
- Keep splint in place until clinic visit
- Elevate, rest

PHASE II (2-6 WEEKS): EARLY MOTION

- Transition from splint to CAM boot. CAM boot at all times (outside of therapy/hygiene) with full heel lift.
- Begin progression of weight bearing. Begin 25% and progress weekly to 100% over four weeks.
- Begin formal Physical Therapy
 - Gentle isometrics in CAM boot, AROM hip, knee, UE exercises
 - Active dorsiflexion to neutral, passive plantar flexion (sit with foot hanging, allow foot to drop).
 - Home exercises: Remove boot, actively dorsiflex to neutral 5 min every hour while awake
- Continue elevation for swelling
- At 4 weeks after surgery, remove ½ of heel lift. Continue progressing weight bearing to full WB at 6 weeks.

PHASE III (6-8 WEEKS): WEIGHT BEARING IN BOOT

- Remove remaining ½ of heel lift
- Continue CAM boot, begin WBAT in CAM boot, wean from crutches
- Physical Therapy:
 - AROM in all planes, no restriction
 - No aggressive PROM or stretching until 12 weeks.
 - Begin gastrocnemius/soleus complex strengthening with theraband
 - OK to begin stationary bike with pedal on heel (not ball/toes)

PHASE IV (8-12 WEEKS): RETURN TO SHOE & EARLY STRENGTH

- Transition to regular shoe
- Physical Therapy
 - Light weight resistance band ROM
 - Begin Static single-leg stance
 - May begin double leg heel raises if tolerated

PHASE V (12-24 WEEKS): STRETCHING AND STRENGTHENING

Weeks 12-16

- Begin light stretching
- Progress to single leg heel raise
- May use elliptical
- Begin in-line running when able to single-leg heel raise

Weeks 16-24

- Step-downs, progress from 2-inch step gradually to 8-inch step
- May return to sport when running without pain