

University Orthopedics, Inc.

ACHILLES TENDON REPAIR

This protocol was developed for patients who have had an achilles tendon repair. Please note this protocol is a guideline. Patients with additional surgery will progress at different rates. Achieving the criteria of each phase should be emphasized more than the approximate duration.

PHASE I: ~1-10 Days Postoperative

GOALS:

- Pain management
- Protection

AMBULATION AND BRACE USE:

L & U Splint – Watch for skin breakdown
Crutches – non weight bearing (NWB)

EXERCISES:

Active motion (AROM) hip and knee
Wiggle toes
Straight leg raise (SLR) x 4
Lower extremity (LE) stretches – Hamstring, quads,
ITB, hip flexors
Ice and Elevation

PHASE II: ~10-21 Days Postoperative

GOALS:

- Minimize quad atrophy

AMBULATION AND BRACE USE:

D/C Splint and remove sutures (Ortho)
Cam walker with ½ inch heel lift

EXERCISES

Continue appropriate previous exercises
Isometrics x 3 No Plantar flexion (PF)
Gentle active DF, INV, EV
Passive PF to tolerance – sit with leg in dependent
position
SLR x 4 with weight mid calf
Short arc quad (SAQ)
Upper body exercises (seated or bench only – no
pushups)
Ice as needed

PHASE III: ~3-4 Weeks Postoperative

GOALS:

- No adhesions

AMBULATION AND BRACE USE:

Cam walker with ¼ inch heel lift
Crutches – weight bearing as tolerated (WBAT)

EXERCISES:

Continue appropriate previous exercises
Scar massage/mobilization with oil/cream
Weight shifts

PHASE IV: ~4-6 Weeks Postoperative

GOALS:

- Neutral DF (0 degrees)

AMBULATION AND BRACE USE:

Cam walker with no lift
Crutches – Full weight bearing (FWB), D/C when gait
is WNL

EXERCISES:

Continue appropriate previous exercises
Isometrics x 4
Towel crunches and side-to-side
Steamboats (Theraband x 4 while standing on
involved LE) in cam walker
Mini-squats, Wall squats, Total gym in cam walker
Stationary bike in cam walker with the heel on the
pedal

PHASE V: ~6-8 Weeks Postoperative

GOALS:

- 10 degrees DF
- Normal gait

AMBULATION AND BRACE USE:

- Taper out of cam walker at home, but wear outside of home

EXERCISES:

Continue appropriate previous exercises
Ankle AROM including plantar flexion – Calf pumping, alphabet, rotations
Light Theraband x 3 – NO plantar flexion
Seated BAPS
Stationary bike in cam walker with toes on the pedal
Pool therapy – Aqua-jogger in deep water

PHASE VI: ~8-12 Weeks Postoperative

GOALS:

- Symmetrical DF
- Walk 2 miles at 15 min/mile pace

AMBULATION AND BRACE USE:

Transition from cam walker to ankle brace

EXERCISES:

Continue appropriate previous exercises
Theraband ex x 4 – Gradually increase resistance
Elgin
Double leg heel raises
Leg press, knee ext, Hamstring curl, hip weight machines
Forward, retro and lateral step downs
Proprioception ex – Double leg BAPS
– Progress to single leg BAPS, ball toss, body blade
Pushup progression
Pool therapy – Chest (waist) deep
Treadmill – Walking progression program
Elliptical trainer

PHASE VII: ~3-4 Months Weeks Postoperative

GOALS:

- No calf atrophy
- Run 2 miles at easy pace

AMBULATION AND BRACEUSE:

D/C brace

EXERCISES:

Continue appropriate previous exercises
Single leg heel raises
Functional activities – Fitter, slide board, figure 8's, gentle loops, large zigzags
Treadmill – Running progression program
Stairmaster

PHASE VII: ~4-6 Months Weeks Postoperative

GOALS:

- Return to all activities

EXERCISES:

Continue appropriate previous exercises
Running progression program – Progress to track and hard surfaces
Agility drills / Plyometrics
Transition to home / gym program

No contact sports until 6 months post-op

**This protocol is designed to be administered by a licensed physical therapist and/or certified athletic trainer. Please do not hesitate to contact our office should you have any questions concerning the rehabilitation process.