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 ¾ 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 BRACE USE:
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.**