

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.