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### **POSTOPERATIVE REHABILITATION GUIDELINES** **ACHILLES TENDON REPAIR**

The following protocol is intended as a general guideline for physical therapist, athletic trainer, and patient after an achilles tendon repair. These guidelines are designed to facilitate the expedited and safe return to athletic or professional activity and are based on a review of the current scientific principles of an achilles tendon repair. For the treating health care provider this protocol should not serve as a substitute for individualized clinical decision making during the patient's post-operative course but should rather take into consideration the individual's physical findings, progression, and possible post-operative limitations. If the therapist or patient requires assistance or encounters any postoperative complication they should consult with **the surgeon**.

Physical Therapy to Start in first week after surgery.

#### **Phase I - Immediate Post-Surgical Phase**

##### **Week 1-4**

- WB Status
  - NWB with planter flexed cast
- ROM
  - AROM PF/DF out of splint as tol
- Monitor for signs of infection
- Ice as needed

##### **Weeks 5-6**

- WB Status
  - PWB with ½ inch heel lifts
    - Progressed to FWB by @ 6 weeks post-op
- ROM
  - AROM
    - Inv/Ev/PF/DF
    - Circumduction
- Gentle DF stretching with strap or towel with knee straight
- Ice as needed

##### **Week 7-8**

- Continue with above exercises
- WB Status

- Full Weight Bearing with ¼ inch heel lift
- ROM
  - Continue with strap stretching with knee straight
  - Well leg strengthening
  - Heat/Ice as needed

## **Phase II**

### Week 8-10

- WB Status
  - Full weight bearing with 1/4inch heel lift
- ROM
  - Continue with above stretching
  - Add in knee bend with strap stretch
- Strengthening
  - Theraband strengthening all directions
  - Balance and proprioception exercises
    - Single limb stance
    - BAPS sitting and standing
- Stationary Bike
- Swimming if available
- Modalities ok at this time
  - US/Estim
  - CFM to decrease scar adhesion
- OK to add in leg strengthening
  - Hamstring curls/hip strengthening/Leg extensions
    - No Squats

### Week 10-12

- Continue with above exercises
- Maintain FWB
- D/C Heel Lift
- Standing gastro/Soleus stretching
- Continue with balance and proprioceptive training
- Elliptical/Bike
- Initiate B heel raises
- Ice/Heat PRN

### Week 12-16

- Continue with above exercises
- Progress to single leg heel raises
- Step downs/Mini squats
- Goal of Full ROM

## Phase III Return to activity

### Week 16-20

- Continue with above exercises
- Start Plyometric training
- Start sport specific training
- Start to progress jogging to running

### Week 20+

- Return to sport per MD
- Calf raises up to 1.5x body weight