

heekin orthopedic S P E C I A L I S T S

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ACHILLES TENDON REPAIR **PHYSICAL THERAPY PROTOCOL**

Preoperative Guidelines

- Restore full AROM
- Teach normal heel-toe gait
- Strengthen involved extremity
- Decrease edema if present
- Educate patient on post-op protocol, use of crutches (level surfaces and stairs)

Note: Exercise prescription is dependent upon the tissue healing process and individual functional readiness in *all* stages. If any concerns or complications arise regarding the progress of any patient, physical therapy will contact the orthopedist.

Phase I (Post-op Day 1 –2 weeks) Watch for skin breakdown

- Posterior Splint (remove for ROM/hygiene)
- Crutches – NWB
- SLR x 4
- Gentle PROM 10° DF to 20° PF
- Contralateral toe raises
- Ice and elevation

Goals – pain and edema control, protection

Phase II (Weeks 3-4)

- Hinged walking boot blocked at 10° less than neutral DF and unlimited PF
- Crutches – Progress weight bearing as tolerated
- Stationary bike warm-up (boot on)
- AROM as tolerated
- Isometrics x 4, progress to theraband as tolerated
- Well-Leg theraband if tolerated (if not tolerated, then SLR x4 with weight mid calf)
- Pool (when incision healed): walking all directions, ROM, double calf raises in pool

Goals – Minimize quad atrophy and protect repair, full PF ROM

Phase III (Weeks 5-6)

- WBAT with cane in cam walker blocked at neutral, or cowboy boot
- Continue appropriate previous exercises...progress AROM and strength as tolerated

- Towel crunches, marble pick-ups, towel scoots
- Gentle scar mobilization when wound well healed – keep moist with vitamin E
- Stretch HS
- Single leg balance on level surfaces

Goals – No adhesions, DF to 0°

Phase IV (Weeks 7-12)

- D/C hinged boot/cowboy boot-emphasize normal gait. May need heel lift or heeled shoe
- Continue scar mobilization to ensure no adhesions
- Con't stationary bicycle
- Stairmaster, Elliptical, treadmill walking progression
- Wall sits, mini squats
- Double leg heel raise
- Proprioceptive exercises – BAPS, ball toss, body blade
- Pain free achilles tendon stretching in non weight bearing (strap or towel)
- Pool running

Goal – DF to 10°, normal gait, walk 2 miles at 20 min/mile pace or better

Phase V (Months 3 – 4)

- Functional activities – Fitter, slide board, figure 8's, gentle loops, large zigzags
- Single leg heel raises...emphasize eccentric lowering (slowly)
- Continue strengthening, bicycle, Stairmaster, Elliptical, proprioceptive exs
- Treadmill – Walk-Jog progression program when gait is normal

Goals - No calf atrophy, Run 2 miles at comfortable pace

Phase VI (Months 4+)

- Full activity/agility drills/plyometrics/progress to sports participation

Goals – Return to all activities

No contact sports until 6 months post-op