

Non-operative Achilles - Therapy Guidelines

	WEIGHT BEARING	ORTHOTIC DEVICES	RANGE OF MOTION	GOALS	EXERCISES
0-4 weeks	WBAT in boot	Boot with 1.5 cm heel lift	Plantarflexion only	Dec pain and swelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curl toes downward only • Active Plantarflexion only • No dorsiflexion • No resistance • No strengthening
4-5 weeks	WBAT in boot	Boot with 1 cm heel lift	Plantarflexion only	Working on plantarflexion only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curl toes downward only • Active Plantarflexion only • No dorsiflexion • No resistance • No strengthening
5-6 weeks	WBAT in boot	0.5 cm heel lift	Plantarflexion only	Working on plantarflexion only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curl toes downward only • Active Plantarflexion only • No dorsiflexion • No resistance • No strengthening
6-12 weeks	FWB	Boot without heel lift – wean out of boot after 6 weeks as tolerated and guided by therapist	Full ROM, including dorsiflexion	Advance to full ROM of the ankle and begin strengthening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full ankle ROM. • Begin strengthening exercises. Start with plantar flexion exercises and advance to include dorsiflexion exercises. • Advance to conditioning exercises such as e swimming. • Advance to resisted- strengthening.
12+ weeks	Ok to begin jogging	None	Full ROM	Sport specific activities	Return to sport

Achilles Repair Guidelines

	WEIGHT BEARING	BRACE	RANGE OF MOTION	STRENGTH/EXERCISES	Goals
<i>PHASE 1</i> <i>0-2 WEEKS</i>	NWB with crutches	Short Leg Splint	N/A	Leg elevation/edema control Upper body ergometer Curl toes down	Wound healing
<i>PHASE 2</i> <i>4-6 WEEKS</i>	Progress to WBAT in CAM boot	CAM boot Worn at all times 2 heel lifts (2-4 wks) 1 heel lift (4-6 wks)	Active dorsiflexion to neutral Gentle passive ankle plantarflexion	SLR Knee ROM Ankle range of motion (ROM) with respect to precautions Pain-free isometric ankle inversion, eversion, dorsiflexion and sub-max plantarflexion Open chain hip and core strengthening	Normalize gait, wean out of crutches Protection of post-surgical repair May progress to phase 3 when pain-free active dorsiflexion to neutral and no wound complications
<i>PHASE 3</i> <i>6-12 WEEKS</i>	WBAT in normal shoes (lift if needed)	Wean from brace	Full active ROM	Frontal and sagittal plane stepping drills (side step, cross-over step, grapevine step) Gentle gastroc/soleus stretching Static balance exercises (begin in 2 foot stand, then 2 foot stand on balance board or narrow base of support and gradually progress to single leg stand) 2 foot standing nose touches Ankle plantarflexion strengthening with resistive tubing Low velocity and partial ROM for functional movements (mini-squat, step back, lunge) Hip and core strengthening Pool exercises if the wound is completely healed	Normalize gait on level surfaces without boot or heel lift Single leg stand with good control for 10 seconds Active ROM between 5° of dorsiflexion and 40° of plantarflexion

PHASE 4 12-24 WEEKS	WBAT in normal shoes	N/A	Full active ROM	<p>Frontal and transverse plane agility drills (progress from low velocity to high, then gradually adding in sagittal plane drills)</p> <p>Multi-plane proprioceptive exercises – single leg stand</p> <p>1 foot standing nose touches</p> <p>Ankle strengthening – concentric and eccentric gastroc strengthening</p> <p>Functional movements (squat, step back, lunge)</p> <p>Stationary bike</p> <p>Sports-specific drills (4 mo)</p>	<p>Normal gait mechanics without the boot on all surfaces</p> <p>Squat and lunge to 70° knee flexion without weight shift</p> <p>Single leg stand with good control for 10 seconds (20 reps) before sports-specific exercises</p> <p>Active ROM between 15° of dorsiflexion and 50° of plantarflexion</p> <p>Dynamic neuromuscular control with multi-plane activities, without pain or swelling</p>
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Accelerated Achilles Repair protocol

	WEIGHT BEARING	ORTHOTIC DEVICES	RANGE OF MOTION	GOALS	EXERCISES
0-2 weeks	NWB in splint		None	Decrease pain and swelling	Curl toes downward only
2-4 weeks	WBAT in boot	Boot with 2.5 cm heel lift	Plantar flexion of the ankle only.	Working on active plantar flexion only	No resistance No strengthening
4-6 weeks	Weight bear as tolerated in boot	Progress to No heel lift (reduce to no lift by 6 weeks)	Full Active ankle ROM	Full Active ROM	Gradual strengthening exercises in plantar flexion only
6-12 weeks	FWB Wean out of the boot after 6 weeks	None (wean off boot in 1-2 weeks)	Full ROM	Advance strengthening	Advance strengthening exercises to include dorsiflexion. Advance to conditioning exercises such as elliptical, stationery biking and swimming. Advance to resisted strengthening.
12+ weeks	Ok to begin jogging	None	Full ROM	Sport specific activities	Return to sport usually by 4-6 months

