

Achilles Tendon Non-op Rehabilitation Protocol

Phase I (Weeks 0-2)

- **Weightbearing:** Non-weightbearing using crutches
- **Brace:** Patient in plantarflexion splint (3cm)
- **No Formal PT**

Phase II (2-4 weeks):

- Walking boot with 20° plantar flexion heel lift*
- Weightbearing in boot with crutches
- Remove boot in seated position with lower extremity hanging free off table/chair/bed
Active ankle dorsiflexion to neutral only followed by passive gravity-assisted plantar flexion as far as is comfortable only
- Modalities as indicated
- Daily HEP for active dorsiflexion and passive plantar flexion as detailed above 5 minutes every hour

Phase III (4-6 weeks):

- Remove heel lift from boot (In sections)
- Weightbearing in boot
- Continue 2-4 week exercise protocol

Phase IV (6-8 weeks):

- Weightbearing in boot in neutral position (no heel lift)
 - May remove boot for sleeping
- Continue same exercise protocol

Phase V (8-12 weeks):

- Wean off boot first then crutches
- Initiate toe-raising exercises using the unaffected leg to support the injured leg
- Once able to perform toe-raises with the injured leg unsupported, may begin Achilles stretching, strengthening and proprioception exercises

Phase VI (>12 weeks):

- Continue to progress range of motion, strength, proprioception
- Retrain strength, power, endurance
- Increase dynamic weight-bearing exercise, including plyometric training
- Sport-specific retraining

* Patients required to wear the boot while sleeping for first 6 weeks.

* Patients can remove the boot for bathing and dressing, but are required to adhere to the weight bearing restrictions according to the rehabilitation protocol.