



ADVANZ HEALTH

SPORTS MEDICINE | PHYSIOTHERAPY

ACHILLES TENDON REPAIR

REHABILITATION PROTOCOL

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Sports Medicine & Physiotherapy

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ACHILLES TENDON REPAIR

Achilles Tendon ruptures are commonly repaired surgically but may also be managed conservatively (non-surgical) on the advice of your surgeon. The following protocol is based on a surgically repaired tendon.

PHASE 1 – EARLY REHAB (0-3 WEEKS)

GOALS	PRECAUTIONS	RECOMMENDED PROGRAM	CRITERIA TO PROGRESS TO NEXT PHASE <i>(TICK WHEN COMPLETE)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stabilise pain and oedema • Circulation exercises • Wound management (guided by nurse) • Soft tissue management at calf and foot as well as hip and back • Mobility education • Maintenance of rest of body as required • Protect repair site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-weight bearing (NWB) in cast or boot for 2-3 weeks (i.e. no foot on ground at all) • Wound care • DVT awareness 	<p>See Phase 1 exercise videos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulation exercises • Knee and hip ROM ex's • Hip and quad strength ex's (OKC) • Toe crunches/spreads • Upper body and core training 	<input type="checkbox"/> Approval by surgeon

Please note that the below timeframes are a guide. Your surgeon or physio may request slight variations for optimum outcome.



PHASE 2 – (3-8 WEEKS)

GOALS	PRECAUTIONS	RECOMMENDED PROGRAM	CRITERIA TO PROGRESS TO NEXT PHASE <i>(TICK WHEN COMPLETE)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase weight bearing • Move ankle gradually to plantar-grade (flat foot – 0deg DF) • Manage wound and soft tissue around calf • Full body balance and maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orthosis normally set at 30 degrees PF (4 x heel wedges) start of phase 2. • TWB only for first 2 weeks • PWB at week 4 with increased orthosis ROM towards plantar grade • FWB at week 6-7 with orthosis to plantar grade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gait retraining as per weight bearing stages in precautions • Soft tissue maintenance by physio • Ankle mobilisation to neutral • At 4 weeks – scar mobilisation <p>See Phase 2 exercise videos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weeks 3-6: Gentle isometrics of Achilles in boot • Weeks 6 - 8: Seated calf raises, using weight of leg/ reformer/weights • Pilates reformer for Core, pelvic and upper body strength • Stationary bike (6 weeks) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Surgeon and physio approval <input type="checkbox"/> Able to full weight-bear in boot



PHASE 3 – (8-12 WEEKS)

GOALS	PRECAUTIONS	RECOMMENDED PROGRAM	CRITERIA TO PROGRESS TO NEXT PHASE <i>(TICK WHEN COMPLETE)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full ROM ankle • Tolerance to regular shoe • Good gait mechanics • Good balanced body and strength • Aim for double standing calf raise by 12 weeks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No dynamic loading of Achilles in this period. • Wean from boot slowly • Avoid over-stretching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progression into shoe with a heel and then into a regular trainer by end of period • Soft tissue management <p>See phase 3 videos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress resistance using reformer or weights, aim for double standing calf raise by 12 weeks • Progress to swimming (no fins) and cycling (avoid loading past neutral) • Proprioception program • Pilates Reformer training for strength 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Surgeon and physio approval <input type="checkbox"/> Transition from boot to shoe <input type="checkbox"/> Normal walking pattern



PHASE 4 – (3-6 MONTHS)

GOALS	PRECAUTIONS	RECOMMENDED PROGRAM	CRITERIA TO PROGRESS TO NEXT PHASE <i>(TICK WHEN COMPLETE)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strength 5/5 • Perform single leg calf raise • Return to run by end phase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid dynamic activities (running, hopping, jumping) 	<p>See phase 4 exercise videos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full lower limb strength program in gym • Progress to single leg exercises • Proprioception program • Running education and program • Controlled slow eccentrics of calf 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Surgeon and physio approval <input type="checkbox"/> Single leg calf raises



PHASE 5 – (6-12 MONTHS)

GOALS	PRECAUTIONS	RECOMMENDED PROGRAM	CRITERIA TO PROGRESS TO NEXT PHASE (TICK WHEN COMPLETE)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return to sport/activity • Restore full strength/power • Resolve all pain • Improve whole-body strength • Improve fitness • Prevent recurrence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not ignore significant pain or changes in strength 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue individualised strength and stretching program prescribed by your therapist 2. Cardio fitness: cycling, swimming, boxing, cross-trainer (running when allowed). 3. Plyometric exercises: (See videos) Progress through levels: L1: double leg (jumping) L2: single leg (hopping) L3: increase speed L4: increase duration 4. Running rehab (See attached) 5. Sports specific skill retraining 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Surgeon clearance <input type="checkbox"/> Strength and power >95% of non-injured leg <input type="checkbox"/> No pain with daily activities, sports, during/after rehab exercises <input type="checkbox"/> Full range of motion (knee to wall test) <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-injury fitness/load restored (or enhanced) <input type="checkbox"/> Biomechanical errors resolved



ABBREVIATIONS:

- NWB: non-weight-bearing
- TWB: touch weight-bearing
- PWB: partial weight-bearing
- FWB: full weight-bearing
- DF: dorsiflexion
- PF: plantarflexion
- ROM: range of movement

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