



## Post Surgery Instructions *Achilles Tendon Rupture*

### General Treatment Facts

- The goal of this surgery is to return you to full strength, power, and function in the shortest amount of time.
- You will receive crutches (if you don't already have them) from the recovery room after surgery.
- You will receive a walking boot at your first postoperative visit. This boot will be worn when walking for up to 8 weeks.

### Post Surgery Course

#### Day 1-4

- The foot will be wrapped in a plaster splint with lots of padding. If for any reason your splint is uncomfortable or too tight, remove the ace wrap, loosen padding, and re-apply to your comfort level.
- It is important to ice and elevate the foot, take pain medication, and rest as needed.
- Expect numbness in the ankle for 4-12 hours and then anticipate the onset of pain. Your strongest pain will be the first 2-3 days after surgery.
- No weight bearing on injured ankle.
- Do not get the foot or splint wet.

#### Day 4-10

- Pain should improve after the 3<sup>rd</sup> day. If your pain has worsened after day 3 or you have a fever and/or chills, please call our office.
- Wiggle toes and move foot around in splint as tolerated.
- Perform toe curls.
- Perform isometric calf contractions.
- Work the knee, hip, and upper extremities as tolerated.

#### Day 10 - 3 weeks (approximately)

- First postoperative visit in the office.
- Your splint will be taken off and your sutures will be removed.
- You will be placed in a walking boot with two heel lifts to keep your ankle in 20 degrees of plantar flexion (toes pointing down). Be careful to not move the ankle upwards into dorsiflexion (toes pointing up).
- Begin drawing the alphabet with the foot and ankle.
- If the incision is healing well, you may get the foot wet in the shower 2-3 days after your postoperative visit.

### **3-6 weeks**

- Walking in boot without crutches is permitted.
- Begin physical therapy between weeks 3-5 (may vary).
- If the incision is healed, you may submerge the ankle under water in a bath or pool.
- Gentle exercise for cardiovascular conditioning on a stationary bike is permitted in the boot.
- Exercising in the pool is permitted with buoyancy conditions, however, swimming, pushing off, and kicking are not.

### **6-8 weeks**

- Biking without the boot is permitted.
- Swimming is permitted.
- Single heel raises in pool with water at chest level.

### **8-12 weeks**

- Wean out of boot gradually.
- Walk progressively more as tolerated.
- Treadmill on level surfaces.
- Avoid lunging, squatting, jumping or single heel raises.
- Biking with resistance as tolerated.
- Pool therapy – walking, gentle hopping and jumping in waist deep water.

### **12-16 weeks**

- Treadmill walking on increased incline, gradual progression to jogging if symptom free.
- Road biking permitted.
- Progressive sub maximal dorsiflexion and plantarflexion for endurance.
- Pool therapy - pushing off as tolerated. Avoid diving.

### **16-20 weeks**

- Progress to running, but not sprinting.
- Individualized strength and flexibility program.
- Progress proprioceptive and balance training to include wobble board or advanced single-leg balance activities.

### **20-24 weeks**

- Running, jumping, and squatting are introduced and advanced.
- Sport specific training with careful monitoring in accordance to pain and swelling.