

## **ACHILLES REPAIR REHABILITATION PROTOCOL**

For both operative and non-operative Achilles healing

**WARNING:** Nearly all re-ruptures happen in the first 12 weeks. Working harder on exercises will not help you heal faster, but may lead to stretching out of your healing tissues causing permanent weakness. No Achilles stretching for 6 months. No active dorsiflexion for 3 months.

**Weeks 1-2:** Strict Non-Weight Bearing while splinted in plantarflexion at all times.

**Week 3-4:** Full weight bearing in Achilles boot with 3 wedges. If painful, partial weight bear with crutches building up to full weight bearing. Keep either your boot (day) or splint (night) at all times. You may take them off to shower, but sit down while you shower and be very careful not to put any weight on your foot.

**Week 5:** Walk in boot with 2 wedges. Boot or splint at all times (24/7) except for twice daily for inversion/eversion with ankle in plantar flexion. Stationary bike in boot (no resistance) 20 min a day 3x/week

**Week 6:** Boot with 1 wedge. Continue same activity as week 5.

**Week 7:** Walk flat in your boot (all wedges out). Stationary bike with no boot 20 min day 3-5 times per week. Sitting heel raises.

**Week 8:** Begin to wean out of the boot. We will give you a heel lift to put in your athletic shoe at home. When you leave the house, put boot back on. Increase stationary bike no boot 30 min, 3-5x/week

**Week 9:** Discontinue boot if painless. Use heel wedge in shoe. Wear Boot for lifting, travel, Costco, and places with crowds. Start physical therapy. Begin gentle elliptical and strength training activities such as squats (exercise ball behind back against wall) and assisted double foot heel raises with knees bent.

**Weeks 10-12:** Discontinue heel lift. Progress to unassisted double foot heel rise, assisted single leg heel rise and proprioceptive training. Stationary bike - increase resistance/intensity (No standing/out of the saddle riding). Walk on flat ground 20 min/day. Re-ruptures or stretching your repair out can happen during this time, please be careful. Use boot for any activities that put your achilles at risk of reinjury.

**Weeks 12-15:** Continue above program and gently increase intensity of activities.

**Weeks 16-18:** Two legged jumping, light jogging and single leg heel raises.

**Week 19 and beyond:** Continue progressing intensity of activities. Unrestricted activities/full sports at 6 months post-operative pending completion of the Running program.