

Achilles Tendon Rupture (Nonsurgical) – Rehabilitation Guidelines

Derek Plausinis, MASC, MD, FRCS(C)

0 to 2 Weeks Post-injury

- No weight bearing
- Splint, no ankle motion exercises

2 to 4 Weeks

- 'Touch' weight bearing, crutches
- Walker boot full time except for exercises:
 - In seated position, raise foot up to no higher than the 'neutral' or '90°' position
 - Allow foot to gently lower back to a toe-down position
- Heel wedges (to achieve 20 degrees plantarflexion) in a walker boot

4 to 6 Weeks

- Start weight bearing as tolerated in walker boot
- Continue '2 to 4 week' protocol

6 to 8 Weeks

- Wean from heel lifts
- Weight bearing as tolerated
- Start **slow gradual stretching and strengthening** without restriction
 - Only as pain and comfort allows – go slowly
- In boot, may start gentle cycling, walking for fitness

8 to 12 Weeks

- Wean off boot – return to crutches/cane as needed and gradually wean off
- When comfortable, start heel raises on both feet
 - Gradually progress to single heel raise

After 6 Months

- Continue gradual return to full activities
- Progress sport specific training if:
 - No pain
 - Full motion
 - Full strength
- Return to a court sport or competitive activity with sudden change of direction should typically wait until 9 months