

Achilles Tendon Rehabilitation Protocol

Frequency: 2 times weekly

Duration: 12 weeks

0-2 Weeks:

- Non-weight-bearing in plantarflexion splint or KOBE boot set to level 3.
- Boot/splint to remain on at all times
- Will need crutches or alternative, such as a knee scooter

2-4 Weeks:

- Partial weight bearing in boot with 3 heel wedges or KOBE boot at level 2 with crutches.
- Boot/splint to remain on at all times - except bathing
 - Remove boot in seated position with lower extremity hanging free off table/chair/bed
- Physical Therapy / Home Therapy
 - Active dorsiflexion to neutral only. No passive dorsiflexion.
 - Modalities to control swelling
 - Hip/Knee exercises with no ankle involvement
 - Non-weight-bearing exercises (one leg bicycle, arm cycle, etc)
 - Pool Therapy (if available) within motion and weight bearing limitations

4-6 Weeks:

- Progress to weight bearing as tolerated in boot with 2 wedges (Remove bottom wedge) or KOBE boot set to level 1.
- Boot/splint to remain on at all times - except bathing
 - Remove boot in seated position with lower extremity hanging free off table/chair/bed
- At week 5, if using wedges, remove second wedge leaving only one remaining.
- Physical therapy / home therapy continues as above.

6-8 Weeks:

- Weight bearing as tolerated in boot with no lifts/wedges or KOBE boot set to level 0 with flat baseplate
- Boot able to come off when sleeping - On at all other times.
- Physical Therapy
 - Active dorsiflexion stretching, slowly. Not beyond neutral. No passive stretching.
 - Graduated resistance exercises (open and closed kinetic chain, functional activities)
 - Proprioceptive and gait retraining
 - May begin biking, elliptical, walking on treadmill/stairmaster in boot.

12 Weeks:

- Wean from boot. May need crutches when out of boot. If so, wean gradually. Start with 1 to 2 hours out of boot per day. You may notice increased swelling.
- Shoes with single heel lift.
- Physical Therapy
- Continue ROM, strength training, and proprioception. No passive stretching beyond neutral dorsiflexion until after 12 weeks.

16 Weeks:

- Continue with single heel lift in shoes until week 14. OK for barefoot at 16 weeks.
- Advance PT with strength power endurance, plyometric exercise, sport specific training.
- From here on out, you can generally start pushing to return to full activities. Goal to return to full activities and sports by 6 months.