Dr. Hjelm's Achilles Tendon Repair Protocol

TIMEFRAME	TREATMENT	GOALS
PHASE I Weeks 0-4	• NWB x 2 weeks, brace/splint worn at all times until removed by MD, elevate when resting • HEP: toe curls, toe spreading, and gentle foot motion as able in the splint, prone knee flexion, knee extension stretch, standing hip strengthening in NWB, quad set, SLR, clamshells	• Control inflammation and swelling - rest/elevation. • Gradual increase of ADL's. • Leg strengthening exercises.
PHASE II Weeks 4-6	• Transition to CAM walker, WBAT ONLY IN CAM • Gait training with crutches • Heel lifts (Remove starting at week 4) Remove 1 single heel lift per week with guidance of surgeon/PT • Continue hip/knee HEP from Phase 1 • HEP: (Weeks 2-4) Begin ankle ROM (PROM PF/Inv/Ev below neutral, AROM PF, DF to neutral (Weeks 4-6) Add gentle active DF to gentle stretch of Achilles • Progress core strengthening, stationary bike in CAM	• Manage pain and control swelling. • Maintain hip and knee ROM. • Improve core, hip, and knee strength. • Crutch use to FWB in CAM • Slowly increase DF to neutral.
PHASE III Weeks 6-12 Most initiate formal PT at 6 weeks postop with MD approval.	• Discontinue heel lift in CAM walker WBAT weeks 6-8 (crutches PRN) • Wean from CAM walker weeks 8-12 (crutches PRN) • Emphasize normal gait throughout • Exercises: TB strength x 4, DL calf raise to SL eccentric calf raise, balance and proprioception, progress stretching, stationary bike, pool therapy/gait training • Goal is full PROM weeks 8-12	• FWB in CAM walker then weaning out of CAM walker. • Increase core, knee, and hip strength. • Increase ankle DF • Early strengthening of calf muscles.
PHASE IV Weeks 12+	• Sport Specific Training • Progression of weight bearing strengthening, proprioception, and balance training • Begin pain free plyometrics and jogging at 14 weeks (if strength is appropriate) • MD clearance for return to sport • Hop Testing/Functional Return to • Sport Testing	• FWB with no pain/normal gait. • Strength 4+/5 Achilles. • Good single leg balance. • Full LE strength. • Able to perform DL heel raises.

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