

**Achilles Tendon Rehabilitation Protocol Frequency:** 2 times weekly

Duration: 12 weeks

Weeks 0-2:

- Non-weight-bearing in plantarflexion splint or KOBE boot set to level 3
- Will need crutches or alternative, such as a knee scooter

Weeks 2-4:

- Partial weight bearing in boot with 3 heel wedges or KOBE boot at level 2 with crutches.
- 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) o Pool Therapy (if available) within motion and weight bearing limitations

Weeks 4-6:

- Progress to weight bearing as tolerated in boot with 2 wedges (Remove bottom wedge) or KOBE boot set to level 1.
- At week 5, if using wedges, remove second wedge leaving only one remaining.
- Physical therapy / home therapy continues as above.

Weeks 6-8:

- Weight bearing as tolerated in boot with no lifts/wedges or KOBE boot set to level 0 with flat baseplate
- 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.

Weeks 8-12:

- 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.

## Weeks 12-16:

- 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.
  - No passive stretching beyond neutral dorsiflexion until after 16 weeks.
- 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.