

REHABILITATION GUIDELINES FOR TOTAL ANKLE REPLACEMENT

PHASE I (WEEKS 2-4)

DATES:

Appointments	MD appointment at <i>(10-14 days post-op)</i> Begin physical therapy <i>(2 weeks post-op 2x week)</i>
Rehabilitation Goals	• Ankle ROM • Edema control • Pain control • Protect lateral incision posterior splint
Precautions	• NWB x 4 weeks with posterior splint • PROM ankle dorsiflexion/plantarflexion only +AROM
Suggested Therapeutic Exercises	• Ankle AROM/PROM DF/PF only • Quad/hamstring stretching • Open chain quad and hamstring strength • 4-way open chain hip strength
Cardiovascular Exercises	• Seated UBE warm-up
Progression Criteria	• Pain controlled • Swelling controlled to moderate levels

PHASE II (WEEKS 4-6)

DATES:

Appointments	Continue physical therapy <i>(2x week)</i>
Rehabilitation Goals	• Gain full ankle ROM in DF/PF only • Start gentle foot/ankle muscle activation • Full WBAT in CAM boot
Precautions	• .PWB progressing to WBAT by 6 weeks in CAM boot

Suggested Therapeutic Exercises	• Foot intrinsic ex's • Ankle isometrics start at 4 weeks • Ankle AROM in DF/PF only
Cardiovascular Exercises	• Walking in pool/aquatic therapy • Stationary Bike
Progression Criteria	• Full ankle ROM in DF/PF • Full weight bearing with no AD needed in CAM boot

PHASE III (WEEKS 6-8)

DATES:

Appointments	Continue physical therapy (2x week)
Rehabilitation Goals	• Normalize gait pattern without CAM boot • Gain full ankle ROM in all planes • Ankle strength • Bilateral balance
Precautions	• Begin AROM ankle inversion/eversion but no strength x 8 weeks (isometrics ok)
Suggested Therapeutic Exercises	• Band strength for ankle DF/PF • Gait training • Step up/down • Bilateral balance/proprioception activities • BAPS board for ankle ROM
Cardiovascular Exercises	• Stationary Bike • Swimming • Walking
Progression Criteria	• Normal gait pattern • Full ankle ROM all planes

PHASE IV (WEEKS 8-12)

DATES:

Appointments	Continue physical therapy (1-2x week)
Rehabilitation Goals	• Walking on all terrain (hills and uneven ground ok) • Normal stairs with alternating step pattern • Single leg balance/proprioception
Precautions	• No running x 12 weeks
Suggested Therapeutic Exercises	• Standing calf raises • Squats • Single leg balance/proprioception activities • Eccentric ankle strength all planes
Cardiovascular Exercises	• Walking, hiking, biking, swimming • No running x 12 weeks
Progression Criteria	• Return to sport test prior to cutting motions for sports

Update: Maarten Harris 10/20/2026

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