Ankle Fracture without Syndesmosis Repair Protocol

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**General Notes:** The type of fracture and required fixation may dictate alterations to the general protocol below. Some patients may not progress as quickly as the protocol allows.

**PHASE I**

**Goals:** Wound healing and edema control

**Day 1**

1. Foot wrapped in bulky Jones dressing with plaster preventing movement of the leg
2. Elevate, take pain medication
3. Expect numbness in leg for 4-72 hours depending on the type of anesthesia used.
4. Wiggle Toes as able.
5. Hang operative extremity down for one minute every hour while awake then return to elevated position to encourage circulation.

**Day 10-14**

1. First follow-up in the office, dressing is changed. Sutures removed when wound healed.
2. Placed into cast boot
3. Start plantarflexion (downward movement of the foot), dorsiflexion (upward movement of the foot), inversion (inward), and eversion (outward) motion 4-5x per day out of the boot
4. May shower when sutures are removed but do not submerge in swimming pool, hot tub, bathtub, lake, ocean.
5. Touch down weight bear with crutches.

**PHASE II**

**Goals:** Improve AROM, Control edema

**2-4 Weeks**

1. Initiate physical therapy
2. Edema control
3. Gentle exercise on stationary cycle in boot
4. Continue active motion exercises
5. Towel curls with toes
7. Upper body conditioning.
8. Sleep in boot

4-6 Weeks

1. Start scar massage if needed and wound fully healed.
2. Initiate light resistance bands all planes
3. Initiate seated toe and heel raises
4. May advance weight bearing with crutches

PHASE III

Goals: Restore gait and proprioception. Normal ROM.

6-8 Weeks

1. Second follow-up in the office.
2. Full weight bear
3. Discontinue boot. May use ASO.
4. May start pool activities if available and wound fully healed
5. Advance graduated resistance exercises
6. Advance AROM activities. May initiate AAROM/PROM as needed.
7. Advance proprioception/balance exercises
8. Advance cardiovascular exercises cycling, stairmaster, Elliptical

8-12 Weeks

1. Third follow up visit at 10-12 weeks post op.
2. Advance cardio activities to light running and Alter G
3. Initiate early plyometric and early sport specific drills.

PHASE IV

Goals: Return to normal recreational/sporting activities

>12 Weeks

1. Continue to retrain strength, power, endurance
2. Continue proprioception
3. Plyometric training and full weight lifting.
4. Sport Specific drills
5. Sprints
6. Wean out of ASO
7. Return to sport when functional progression passed.