



Ankle Fracture with 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) 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. Non-weight bearing.

PHASE II

Goals: Improve AROM, Control edema

2-4 Weeks

1. Initiate physical therapy
2. Edema control
3. Continue active motion exercises

4. Towel curls with toes
5. Standing hamstring curls.
6. Upper body conditioning.
7. Sleep in boot

4-6 Weeks

1. Start scar massage if needed and wound fully healed.
2. Continue AROM and start gentle inversion/eversion
3. Initiate light resistance bands all planes
4. Initiate seated toe and heel raises
5. Non-weightbearing

PHASE III

Goals: Normal ROM. Initiate gait

6-8 Weeks

1. Second follow-up in the office.
2. Advance weight bearing to full in cast boot.
3. Wean from crutches
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. Begin proprioception/balance exercises when able to full weight bear
8. Initiate stationary cycling out of cast boot.

8-12 Weeks

1. Third follow up visit at 10-12 weeks post op.
2. Advance proprioception exercises.
3. Wean from boot into ASO
4. Gait training
5. Continue cycle. Initiate elliptical/stair climber as able

PHASE IV

Goals: Return to normal recreational/ sporting activities

>12 Weeks

1. Initiate walk to run program.
2. Continue to retrain strength, power, endurance
3. Continue proprioception

4. Plyometric training and full weight lifting.
5. Sport Specific drills
6. Sprints
7. Wean out of ASO
8. Return to sport when functional progression passed.