



Achilles Tendonosis- Nonoperative

*Tendon continues to improve up to 1 year, so HEP will be very important for these patients

Phase I – PAIN & INFLAMMATION RELIEF

Goals:

- Management and protection of inflamed tissues
- Reduce inflammation
- Normalize gait

Immobilization:

- Potential shoe modification, boot, heel lift, based on level of inflammation per physician discretion

Key Exercises:

- Instrumented soft tissue mobilization of gastroc, soleus, Achilles tendon
- Iontophoresis, dry needling
- Gastrocnemius and Soleus stretching open chain, AROM
- Open chain proprioception drills, BAPS
- Initiate eccentric exercise and concentric with theraband within limited DF ROM
- Address core/hip/knee strengthening as appropriate
- Maintain strength of general ankle musculature, including intrinsics

Exercise Precautions:

- **Mid-substance**
 - Avoid overstretching
 - Maintain level of immobilization per physician instruction
- **Insertional**
 - Avoid overstretching
 - Maintain level of immobilization per physician instruction
 - Avoid closed chain exercises past neutral dorsiflexion
 - Avoid eccentric exercises past neutral dorsiflexion

Criteria to progress to Phase II:

- Able to walk in regular shoes, normal gait pattern, pain free
- Able to perform 10 double leg heel raises < 5/10 pain
- Symmetrical dorsiflexion ROM

Phase II – STRENGTHENING

Goals:

- Eccentric strengthening without increasing inflammation
- Normalize soft tissue mobility and flexibility

Exercises:

- Cycling/walking as tolerated (level surface)
- Initiate and progress SL stance as tolerated
- Progress to SL eccentric as tolerated with knee bent and straight
- Initiate quick rebound heel raises
- Initiate and progress balance
- Continue to address core/hip/knee weakness
- Squatting and lunging exercises

Criteria to Progress to Phase III:

- Pain free with all exercises
- Symmetrical anterior reach with Y Balance
- 30 SL heel raises pain free
- SL squat 1 minute pain free

Phase 3 – RETURN TO SPORT

Week 12-20:

- Initiate jogging when pain free (level surface)
- Initiate sport cord activities
- Initiate plyometric activities
- Initiate agility ladder activities
- Initiate cutting/pivoting activities
- Sport-Specific Exercises

Return to Activities

- Running Between 3-6 months when functional criteria met
- Golf Between 2-3 months when functional criteria met
- Pivoting/cutting sport Between 4-8 months when functional criteria met