

## REHABILITATION FOLLOWING THE SURGICAL TREATMENT OF AN ACHILLES TENDON RUPTURE

### Weeks 0–2

- Plaster cast at 30° of ankle plantar flexion
  - Weight-bearing is not allowed
  - Walking with crutches
- 

### Weeks 3–4

- Orthosis dynamised 0–15° or 0–20° (depending on the orthosis), **with two 1.5-cm heel wedges**
  - Appointments with a rehabilitation physician and a physiotherapist in week 3
  - The orthosis is worn at all times, removed for washing
  - Washing is allowed in a seated position, while keeping the foot within the permitted range of motion
- 

### Weeks 5–6

- Orthosis dynamised 0–30°, **remove heel wedges**
  - Appointments with a physiotherapist in week 5
  - Full weight-bearing as tolerated is allowed in an orthosis
  - Weaning off crutches is allowed, if there is no pain or discomfort
- 

### Weeks 7–9

- Physiotherapist's appointment in the beginning of week 7
  - Weaning out of the orthosis in week 7. Discontinue over the course of a few days, increasing the amount of time without the orthosis (the orthosis may be removed at night)
  - When discontinuing the use of the orthosis, it is recommended to wear shoes with a supportive sole and use a 1–1.5 cm heel lift inside the shoe for 2–3 weeks. Using the heel lift may be discontinued after 12 weeks
  - During this period, the aim is to restore normal walking patterns
- 

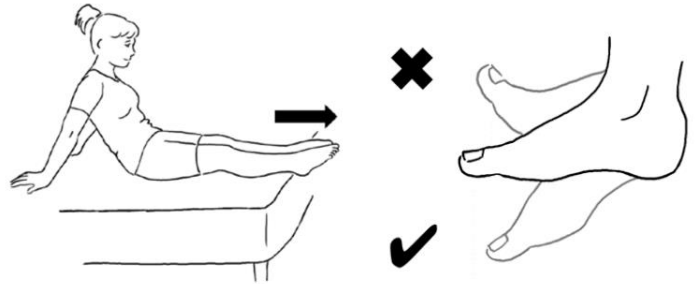
- In months 4–5, the aim is the ability to stand on one foot and rise to your toes
- Jogging and lighter jumping exercises are allowed from month 5 onwards
- Uphill running, ball games, and contact and competitive sports are allowed from months 6–8 onwards
- Depending on the sport, it is recommended to perform sport-specific exercises before returning to competitive sport. A physiotherapist can help with a gradual return to sport

## EXERCISES

### Weeks 3–4:

1. In a seated position, extending and flexing the ankle joint according to the permitted range of motion;

20–30 repetitions, 2–3 sets, 3 times a day



2. Sliding the foot along the floor in a seated position according to the permitted range of motion;

20–30 repetitions, 2–3 sets, 3 times a day

3. Inward and outward rotation of the foot in a seated position;

20–30 repetitions, 2–3 sets, 3 times a day



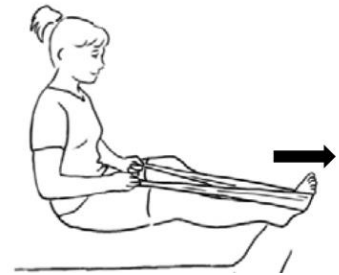
4. Rising to your toes in a seated position (without added weights);  
10–20 repetitions, 2–3 sets, 3 times a day

**Weeks 5–6:**

Continue with exercises 1–3 of the previous period, add the following:

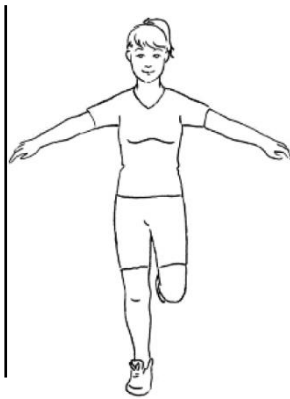
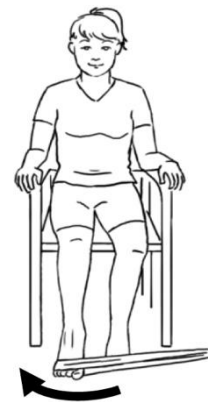
1. Strength exercises with a resistance band (placed around the foot):

- a) Flexing the ankle joint (plantar flexion);  
10–20 repetitions, 2–3 sets, 3 times a day



- b) Inward rotation of the foot;  
10–20 repetitions, 2–3 sets, 3 times a day

- c) Outward rotation of the foot;  
10–20 repetitions, 2–3 sets, 3 times a day



2. Standing on the operated leg (with support);  
5–20 seconds within 2–3 minutes, 3 times a day

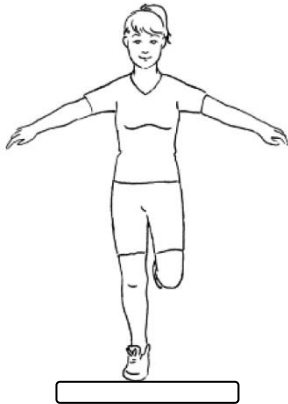
3. Rising to your toes in a seated position (with added weight);  
10–20 repetitions, 2–3 sets, 3 times a day



## Weeks 7–12:

- Continue with the exercises of the previous period as per the recommendations of your physiotherapist, while gradually increasing the load
- Swimming and riding a cycle ergometer are allowed (without the orthosis)
- Lower body strength training (squats, leg press, lunges, etc.) is allowed

1. Rising to your toes while standing on two feet (with support).  
Initially, put more of your body weight on your arms;  
5–10 repetitions or as long as you can, 2–3 sets daily
  - as you progress, put more body weight on the operated leg and/or
  - stand on your toes on two feet and lower yourself on one foot



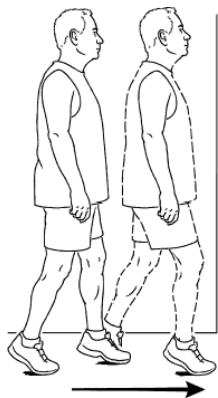
2. Standing on the operated foot on an unstable surface;  
5–20 seconds, for 2–3 minutes every day

## From the 12<sup>th</sup> week:

Begin with lighter plyometric exercises, as per the recommendations of your physical therapist

1. Rising to your toes while standing on one leg;  
10 repetitions or as long as you can, 2–3 sets daily





- 2.** Walking on your toes (with support, if needed);  
3 times, 5 metres

- 3.** Standing on a step (heels below the edge), rise to your toes on two feet;  
10–20 repetitions, 2–3 sets daily



- 4.** Stretching the calf muscles; 3 times, 10–30 seconds

Compiled by Kaisa-Kristina Kivirand, Senior Physiotherapist of the Rehabilitation Department  
Rehabilitation Centre

Rehabilitation Centre (2024)

SA Põhja-Eesti Regionaalhaigla  
J. Sütiste tee 19, Tallinn  
[www.regionaalhaigla.ee](http://www.regionaalhaigla.ee)