

NON-OPERATIVE REHABILITATION PROTOCOL

Non-Operative Achilles Tendinitis

William McLaughlin, MD | Sports Medicine Surgery | Advanced Bone & Joint

Phase 1 | Acute Management

GOALS FOR THIS PHASE

- Decrease pain and inflammation.
- Maintain weight-bearing as tolerated with comfortable walking.
- Initiate Achilles stretching and gentle active ankle ROM.
- Establish low-impact cardiovascular conditioning.

Weight Bearing

- Weight-bearing as tolerated with comfortable walking.

Modalities

- Ice massage, ice bath, or whirlpool.
- Anti-inflammatory modalities.

Flexibility & ROM

- Achilles tendon stretch with towel.
- Heel-cord stretching.
- Active inversion/eversion ROM.

Conditioning

- Exercise bike with weight bearing.

Phase 2 | Strengthening

GOALS FOR THIS PHASE

- Progress plantarflexion and dorsiflexion flexibility.
- Initiate isotonic and isokinetic strengthening.
- Continue cardiovascular conditioning and modalities.

Flexibility

- Plantar flexion and dorsiflexion stretching.

Strengthening

- Plantar flexion and dorsiflexion isotonic/isokinetic.
- Inversion and eversion isotonic.

Conditioning

- Bicycle.

Modalities

- Ice / massage / anti-inflammatory modalities.

Phase 3 | Return to Activity

GOALS FOR THIS PHASE

- Advance multi-plane ankle and foot strengthening.
- Progress cardiovascular conditioning and functional exercises.
- Initiate jogging and gradually progress to running.
- Continue modalities and post-activity recovery.

Strengthening

- Plantar flexion / dorsiflexion and inversion / eversion isotonic / isokinetic.

Conditioning

- Bicycle / elliptical / StairMaster.

Functional

- Functional exercises.
- Jogging — progress slowly to running as tolerated.

Modalities

- Ice / massage / anti-inflammatory modalities.

This protocol is a general guideline. Progression is patient-specific and at the discretion of William McLaughlin, MD.