

Total Ankle Arthroplasty Physical Therapy Protocol

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0-2 Weeks

- Non weight bearing in splint.
- Elevate leg at heart level.
- Move toes often
- If Gastroc is lengthened:
 - Knee straightening exercises.
 - Sit/lie with knee straight
- AROM Hip and Knee

2-6 Weeks

- 2 week MD visit: Sutures out, cast or in CAM boot.
- Up to 50% weight bearing in Static Stance. Goal is to have compression force but no shear.
 - Edema control (may need support stockings), scar mobilization, desensitization.
 - Gentle AROM of toes

6 weeks- 12 weeks

- 6 week MD visit: X-ray and put into CAM boot.
- Begin Gait training with progressive weight bearing in CAM boot.
 - Start at 25% of body weight and add 25% per week.
 - Back off if not tolerated well.
 - When FWB, wean crutches
 - Wear boot at night until 8-9 weeks post op or longer if walking on foot at night or lacking dorsiflexion range.
 - AROM ankle, subtalar joint (if available) and toes.
 - PROM toes with MTs stabilized
 - Short term range goal: neutral ankle dorsiflexion, 15-20° plantarflexion.

12 weeks -5 months

- 12 week MD visit: X-ray
- Wean gradually into regular shoe.
 - Balance and proprioception exercises in stationary stance
 - Progress closed-chain and single-leg-stance exercises
 - Stretching for range, especially into dorsiflexion.
 - Strengthening with elastic band.
 - Short term range goal: 5° ankle dorsiflexion, 20-30° plantarflexion.
 - Sample exercises for home exercise program at 4 months post-op.:
 - Standing stretch with foot supinated or with arch of foot supported.
 - Stand on foam for balance training. Progress to BAPS/Wobble board.
 - Walk on heels, toes and lateral side of feet. Step-ups.

5 months- Discharge

- 5-6 month MD visit.
- Patient will need to avoid high impact to protect prosthesis forever.
 - Maximize quality of gait. Gait drills, advanced balance, proprioceptive work.
 - Long term ankle range goal: 10° ankle dorsiflexion, 30° plantarflexion. Note: unlikely to get dorsiflexion beyond 7-8 degrees. Range depends on quality of surrounding soft tissue and joints.