

PT PROTOCOL

Ankle Fracture (ORIF)

Rehabilitation Protocol

Weight-Bearing Status

ONLY IF DIFFERENT FROM PROTOCOL BELOW

Weight-bearing timing depends on fracture stability, complexity, and hardware placement, and is directed by the surgeon. Follow the weight-bearing status in the phases below unless a different status is indicated here.

- ☐ Non-weight-bearing ☐ Toe-touch / partial weight-bearing ☐ Weight-bearing as tolerated

Boot / cast / precautions: _____

1

Weeks 0–6

Protect fixation; NWB, ROM + proximal/ankle-safe strengthening

2

6–12 Weeks

WBAT if cleared; progress ankle strengthening, proprioception

3

Months 3–6

Full WB; standing strengthening, gait training, return to sport

Milestones above are goals, not guarantees; progression is criterion-based. Less complex fractures may progress more quickly through these phases.

Phase 1 Weeks 0–6

Weight-Bearing: Non-weight-bearing with crutches. Boot/cast per surgeon.

Range of Motion

- PROM/AROM/AAROM ankle, inversion/eversion, toe flexion/extension.

Therapeutic Exercises

- Proximal/core strengthening (maintaining weight-bearing precautions): quad sets, straight leg raise, abdominal bracing, hip abduction, clamshells, prone hip extension, prone hamstring curls.
- Ankle (in boot/splint): seated heel raises, seated toe raises, seated arch doming.

Phase 2 Weeks 6–12

Weight-Bearing: Weight-bearing as tolerated, if cleared by the surgeon.

Range of Motion

- PROM/AROM/AAROM ankle, inversion/eversion, toe flexion/extension.

Therapeutic Exercises

- Seated heel raises; isometric dorsiflexion to neutral.
- Resistance bands for plantarflexion/inversion/eversion.
- Proprioception: single-leg stance with front support.
- Soft tissue mobilization/scar massage/desensitization/edema control.

Weight-Bearing: Full.

Range of Motion

- PROM/AROM/AAROM ankle, inversion/eversion, toe flexion/extension.
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Therapeutic Exercises

- Standing heel raises; single-leg eccentric lowering.
- Step-ups, side steps.
- Proprioception: balance board.
- Progress strengthening, proprioception, and gait-training activities.
- Begin light jogging at 12–14 weeks; running/cutting at 16 weeks; return to sports at 5–6 months.