



# The Orthopaedic & Fracture Clinic

## Syndesmosis Fixation with Tight Rope Rehabilitation Protocol

### Accelerated Rehabilitation Program

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#### **Week 1:**

- Boot immobilization and 3 weeks in an Aircast boot (Don Joy) progressively increasing weight-bearing as pain and swelling allow.

#### **Week 2 to 3:**

- Protection, rest, ice, compression, and elevation every 2 hours to reduce swelling and alleviate pain.
- Ankle AROM in the sagittal plane only to avoid repair stress.
- Isometric ankle strengthening in plantar grade and foot intrinsic muscle exercises.
- Proprioception exercises with the boot on and non-weight-bearing exercises for the knee and hip musculature.

#### **Week 3 to 4:**

- Boot removed to allow static biking as pain allows.
- Ankle AROM allowed in all directions (caution not to force motion and avoidance of combined dorsiflexion and eversion).
- Isotonic strengthening in the sagittal plane from plantar grade into plantarflexion.
- Continued proprioception training in the boot and strengthening of the hip and knee open chain.

#### **Week 4 to 5:**

- Following MD appointment and ambulation outside of the boot, if available running on alter G treadmill 50 percent weight-bearing. Closed chain ankle dorsiflexion within 2 cm of the uninvolved lower extremity knee to wall test.
- Continued exercises as previously outlined.
- Edema and pain control measures.

#### **Week 5 to 6:**

- Ankle AROM in all directions progressed into stiffness avoiding combined dorsiflexion and eversion.
- Continued strengthening and ROM exercises.

- Gait training and proprioception training.
- Running if alter G treadmill available 50 to 75 percent weight-bearing.

**Week 6 to 7:**

- Exercise progressed into full weight-bearing with land based running progression.
- Global lower limb strengthening in weight-bearing.
- Continued AROM pushed into all directions and proprioception exercises.

**Week 7 to 8:**

- Sport specific running drills/running and plyometric exercises.
- Multiplane exercise to improve ROM and ballistic proprioception training.
- Return to participation testing including single leg hop testing and Y balance reach testing to be within 90 percent of uninvolved side.