

What to Expect After Having Achilles Debridement Surgery

For patients of Dr. Lau

Why do I need this surgery?

Your Achilles tendon (strong band of tissue that connects your heel bone to leg muscles) is swollen (inflamed) because the tendon is rubbing against your heel bone. We do this surgery to remove the bone and stop the tendon from rubbing.

What to expect after the surgery

On the day of your surgery:

Your foot is wrapped in a bandage and you wear a splint (soft cast). Do not change the bandage. Expect your foot to be numb for 12 to 24 hours after the surgery.

To manage pain:

- Prop up your foot when you are sitting or lying down by putting pillows under your foot. This lessens swelling.
- Take pain medications as you need.

Important: Do not put any weight on your foot. Use crutches, a walker or knee scooter to move around.

When to call surgeon:

Call Dr. Lau's office or the Orthopaedic Resident on call at 416 340 3155 right away if:

- your wound is still bleeding the day after surgery
- your foot feels numb or tingling the day after surgery
- your toes change colour (purple, white, or spotted) at any time

2 weeks after surgery:

You have a follow-up appointment in Fracture Clinic at Toronto Western.

- We remove the bandage and sutures (stitches).
- We put on a fracture boot (special boot that keeps your ankle safe and comfortable) with 2" heel lifts (shoe inserts that lessen pressure on the Achilles tendon).

- You start physiotherapy to help you point your toes up and down (see attached sheet for details).

Do not put any weight on your foot. Continue to use a walker or knee scooter to move around.

4 weeks after surgery:

You have a follow-up appointment by phone with your surgeon. You will remove half the heel lifts from your fracture boot. You continue doing physiotherapy.

Do not put any weight on your foot. Continue to use a walker or knee scooter to move around.

6 weeks after surgery:

You have a follow-up appointment in Fracture Clinic at Toronto Western.

- We take the remaining lifts out of your fracture boot.
- You continue physiotherapy to build your ankle strength and flexibility.

You start walking on the foot while wearing your fracture boot.

8 to 10 weeks after surgery:

You have a follow-up appointment in Fracture Clinic at Toronto Western.

Walk normally without wearing the fracture boot for a few minutes at a time. Slowly walk for longer as pain permits.

What side effects can I expect?

Your ankle may be swollen for 6 to 12 months after surgery. It may feel throbbing, achy and uncomfortable at the end of the day. This is normal and gets better over time.

For more information:

Dr. Johnny T.C. Lau, MD, MSc, FRCSC
Orthopaedic Surgeon, Foot & Ankle Surgery
Assistant Professor, University of Toronto

Phone: 416 603 6292

Fax: 416 603 3437

Address:

Schroeder Arthritis Institute
University Health Network
Toronto Western Hospital
Room 13MC423
399 Bathurst Street
Toronto, Ontario M5T 2S8