

# What to Expect After Having Achilles Tendon Repair Surgery

For patients of Dr. Lau

## Why do I need this surgery?

Your Achilles tendon (strong band of tissue that connects the heel bone to leg muscles) is torn or stretched. We do this surgery to repair or replace the tendon.

## 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 at 416 603 6292 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 your Achilles tendon).
- You start physiotherapy to help you point your toes up and down (see Achilles Accelerated Protocol for details).

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

#### **4 weeks after surgery:**

You have a follow-up appointment by phone with your surgeon. The doctor will ask you remove half the heel lifts. You will continue doing physiotherapy.

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

#### **6 weeks after surgery:**

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

- We take all the 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