

Ankle Arthroscopy Post-Operative Rehabilitation Protocol

Patient name: _____

Date of Surgery: _____

0 – 7–10 Days

- **Non-weight bearing** in postoperative splint with crutches / knee scooter / iWalk device
- Keep splint **clean and dry – do not remove**
- Elevate ankle above level of heart as much as possible
 - You may lower to ground level for 5 minutes every hour while awake
- Wiggle toes frequently to promote circulation
- No ankle range of motion exercises while in splint

7–10 Days – 2 Weeks (After first postoperative visit and splint removal)

- Transition into **CAM boot**
- **Weight bear as tolerated** in CAM boot
 - Crutches may be used for comfort initially
- Begin **gentle ankle range of motion exercises** at least 5 times daily:
 - Dorsiflexion (pull foot up)
 - Plantarflexion (push foot down)
 - Gentle circles
- Avoid high-impact activity
- Continue elevation for swelling control

2 – 4 Weeks

- Progress weight bearing in CAM boot
- May begin transitioning out of CAM boot into supportive sneakers **once pain and swelling allow**
- **ASO ankle brace** as needed
- Begin formal **physical therapy if needed** (often optional for simple scope cases)
 - Focus on range of motion
 - Edema control
 - Proprioception and balance
- Stationary bike may begin when comfortable

4 – 6 Weeks

- Full weight bearing in sneakers
- Progressive strengthening exercises
- Light elliptical / low-impact cardio
- May begin **straight-line jogging** when pain free and good single-leg control

6 – 8 Weeks

- Gradual return to higher-impact activities
- Agility and sport-specific drills
- Return to sports as tolerated

Expected Recovery Notes

- Swelling may persist for several months
- Mild clicking or stiffness can be common early on
- Return to full activity is often between **6–8 weeks**, depending on intraoperative findings