

Tibialis anterior repair operative treatment protocol

Weeks 1 and 2

Non-weight bearing in post-op splint

Crutches at all times

Weeks 3 through 6

Weight bearing as tolerated in Vacoped boot locked at 10 degree dorsiflexion (cannot be removed)

Crutches as needed

Weeks 7 and 8

Vacoped unlocked from neutral-10 degrees dorsiflexion

Controlled early motion: Remove the Vacoped at least five times a day while sitting on the edge of a table with both legs hanging down. Gravity plantarflex the foot and then actively dorsiflex the foot to a horizontal (neutral) position. Perform a series of twenty-five repetitions of this exercise.

Weight-bearing as tolerated in Vacoped (worn at all times)

Start PT

GOALS:

- **Reduce edema / decrease pain / ankle PF to neutral DF only**
- Soft tissue massage, gentle scar mobilization
- Modalities as needed to decrease swelling/pain
- Gentle PROM of ankle to neutral position only, can do gentle/gradual AROM in plantarflexion
- Ham/quad flexibility
- General lower extremity NWB straight leg raise program/strengthen hip rotators, set up HEP
- Stationary bike with boot on

Weeks 9 and 10

Vacoped unlocked from 10 degrees dorsiflexion-15 degrees plantarflexion

Controlled early motion continues

Weight-bearing as tolerated in Vacoped (worn at all times)

Continue PT

GOALS:

- **Continue to decrease edema and pain / increase ankle PF to 15 degrees / begin gentle NWB strengthening**
- Modalities as needed for pain/swelling
- Soft tissue massage for scar mobilization
- PROM/AROM/AAROM ankle PF gradual to beyond neutral position
- Continue with increasing PF ROM and inv/eversion
- Start isometric strengthening all planes of motion - especially DF – multi-angle

Weeks 11 to 12

Vacoped fully unlocked (worn at all times)

WBAT in Vacoped

Controlled early motion continues

Continue PT

GOALS:

- **Ankle DF = contralateral side / gait training**
- Continue with above treatment in previous weeks
- Progress strengthening with Theraband and manual resistance - all ankle motions, focusing on DF
- Gait training

Weeks 13 and beyond

Vacoped fully unlocked, begin weaning into Malleotrain and sneaker

Continue PT

GOALS:

- **Equal ankle ROM to contralateral side / normalize gait / focus on strengthening**
- Continue with above treatment to increase ROM as needed
- Continue with strengthening - once patient comfortable with normal gait in supportive shoe - can progress to WB activity - starting gradual with double limb support
- Pool therapy as able – excellent way to start strengthening