

## **ANKLE FUSION (ARTHRODESIS) POST-OP PROTOCOL**

### **1-6 WEEKS (Non weight bearing)**

- Elevate the foot as much as possible, especially in the first week
- At ~6 week post-op the cast is removed and you will be placed in the boot walker
- You will be then able to start weight bearing in a gradual fashion, orders to be given by surgeon

### **6-10 WEEKS**

#### **Goals:**

- Reduce swelling
- Increase ROM
- Prevent soft tissue adhesions
- Maintain hip/knee muscle strength and flexibility
- Pain management

#### **General:**

- Gait re-education as tolerated
- Electrotherapy/modalities
- Ice/Contrast Baths as needed.
  - Careful with diabetic feet, i.e. heat.
- Effleurage massage, scar tissue management
- Compressive stocking for swelling

#### **Active Exercises:**

- Seated wobble board
- Prone hip extension, sidelying hip abduction, bridging
- Isometric quadricep and hamstring sets
- Stretches - lower extremity muscle groups
- Core exercises in lying, ball sitting
- Bike with boot on if tolerated

### **10-12 WEEKS**

#### **Goals:**

- Improve range of motion and strength in ankle and leg as available
- Initiate proprioceptive retraining exercises as tolerated
- Gait re-education

#### **General:**

- Electrotherapy/modalities as needed
- Passive joint mobilizations as needed
- Continue to wear compression stockings to control swelling as needed

#### **Active Exercises:**

- Week 8-10 exercises continued
- Seated wobble board
- Gait re-education with cane
- Stationary bicycle no resistance, possibly only arcs, progress to mild resistance as tolerated
- Progress quadriceps strengthening as appropriate with leg press, shuttle, and wall squats (1/4 squat only)
- Balance activities/walking on different surfaces as tolerated
- Core exercises progressed as tolerated
- Hamstring strengthening - standing leg curls with wall cables

### **12+ WEEKS**

- Electrical modalities as needed for pain and swelling control
- FWB gait re-education
- Continue with exercises as above, progressing range of motion
- Seated wobble board activities
- Walking program on treadmill, increased stationary cycling

#### References:

Adapted from Ankle Fusion Pre-Operative Package of Citadel Physiotherapy Ltd, Dalhousie Orthopaedics, Halifax, UK