Conservative management of a ruptured Achilles tendon

A decision has been made in conjunction with the doctor regarding your treatment. Conservative treatment means no surgery but rather management of your ruptured tendon with a plaster cast for two weeks, a moon boot for four weeks, and finally heel raises on your shoes for 16 weeks.

Weeks 0 to 2
Your lower leg will be put in a cast with your toes pointing to the floor. You are not permitted to walk on this cast and will need to use crutches or a frame.
You will also be given a prescription for the moon boot you will need when the cast is removed. You will need to make an appointment for your moon boot fitting at:
   Orthotics (S.I.) Ltd
   9 Walker St (you will be given a map)
The orthotics staff will issue you with a hinged moon boot, checking the fit by trying it on your unaffected leg.
You must bring this moon boot with you when you come to have your cast removed at two weeks after your injury.

Weeks 2 to 6
At this appointment your cast will be removed and the moon boot fitted.
   - You are not allowed to walk in the moon boot.
   - Take the moon boot off for showering with care. A shower stool may give added security.
   - You are not allowed to take the boot off in bed at night.
Prior to your next appointment at six weeks, someone needs to take two pairs of your shoes to Orthotics (S.I.) Ltd to have a heel raise applied to the heel of your shoes. If you do not want both heels raised in a pair of shoes you may get the raise put on the injured side only. These shoes should be a supportive type and not have a high (or stiletto) heel already. The shoes should not be new as your injured limb may swell initially.
It is often a good idea to get raises put on a pair of work shoes and on a pair of dress/casual shoes. There is no cost for this service, and the raises can be removed after six weeks with no damage to your shoes. Please allow at least five working days for this to be done.
You must bring a shoe with the heel raise with you when you come to have your moon boot removed at six weeks post-injury.

Weeks 6 to 16
Your moon boot will now be removed and you are now permitted to walk freely as long as you have the raised shoe/s on. Initially you will need crutches to assist with your mobilisation. You will be given a Tubigrip bandage which will help control any swelling that may occur as swelling is normal. The Tubigrip is to be removed at night.
- Care should be taken when going upstairs to put your whole foot on the tread to avoid extra stress on your healed tendon.
- Put your shoe on, or use your crutches when getting up to the toilet at night.
- Be careful not to slip over when in the shower or the bath.
- Physiotherapy should only be used to assist you to learn to walk again (gait training) as you do not want your tendon stretched. It will slowly stretch back to normal with walking. Physiotherapy may be recommended at your next follow-up appointment.

**Contact numbers**

Orthopaedic Outpatient Department  
Christchurch Hospital  
(03) 364–0800

Physiotherapy Department  
Christchurch Hospital  
(03) 364–0680

Issued by: Orthopaedic Outpatient Department, Christchurch Hospital.

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