

Surgical Patient Education

Tendon/Ligament Repair

What is an Tendon/Ligament Repair?

A Tendon and/or Ligament repair surgery is performed to fix diseased or traumatized tissue in the foot or ankle.

The surgeon makes precise cuts to the foot and may either repair the tendon and/or ligament or use hardware to help support and restore stability.



What are the Risks?

- **Infection** - There is always a risk of infection when you make surgical cuts to the skin, this is slightly higher with implanted hardware (plates and screws), but we do multiple things to decrease this risk, such as administer antibiotics and monitor your blood sugar if you are diabetic.
- **Bleeding** - There is a risk of bleeding as with all surgical incisions/procedures. This is minimal with tendon/ligament repair.
- **Damage to blood vessels or nerves** - There are many blood vessels and nerves in the area of the surgical procedure, but damage to these tend to be minimal.

What happens during the procedure?

- This is usually an outpatient procedure, which means you will go home the same day.
- You will arrive at the surgery center and go to Pre-Op and be checked in.
- You will then be taken to the operating room and will be placed on monitors and watched closely while you are put to sleep.
- After you are asleep, the surgeon will make an incision(s) to your foot and perform the procedure.
- Your skin will then be sutured closed and gauze and a large bandage will be placed over the foot and you will usually go home with a walking boot.
- You will be woken up and when you are stable you will go home, usually within 1-2 hours.

Before Surgery

- You may be asked to stop certain medications such as aspirin or ibuprofen, be sure to check with your surgeon's office and anesthesia to see what medications to stop.
- You will be asked not to eat or drink the night before surgery, it is important that you follow these instructions.
- You will be asked to shower the night before or morning of surgery.
- You need to arrange help at home in preparation for surgery. You will not be able to walk on your foot for a minimum of 4 weeks and possibly longer.

After Surgery

- You will have a bulky dressing to your foot afterwards that will stay on until you follow up with your surgeon.
- You will also have a walking boot and need crutches or other device to help you keep your weight off the foot.
- If you shower, use a waterproof dressing or bandage to cover your dressing to your foot so it does not get wet.
- You may be given a prescription for medication for pain, sometimes this can also be over the counter. It can be important to take the medicine as prescribed and alternate the medicine to get maximum pain control.
- Ice and elevation are the most effective ways to treat your pain after surgery. Use the ice as long as it decreases your pain.
- Keep your foot elevated as much as possible. This will make you more comfortable and decrease the risk of a blood clot.
- Physical Therapy is not usually needed.

Recovery After an Tendon/Ligament Repair

How long will I be out of work?

- You should prepare to be off work for up to **4-6 weeks** if your job cannot accommodate your restrictions. This means that if you cannot follow your doctor's instructions at work, you will need to be off.
- The recovery may be shorter or longer and you can sometimes go back to work quicker depending on your job and activities performed at your job.
- You will **NOT** be able to walk on your foot for a minimum of 4 weeks and maybe longer.
- You usually **DO NOT** need physical therapy.
- You will have sutures in your foot that will come out after 2 weeks.
- You will need crutches or a scooter afterward.