

## **Rehabilitation Protocol: Bimalleolar Ankle Fracture Open Reduction Internal Fixation**

### **Phase I: 0-2 weeks**

- Brace: Splint with ankle in neutral position
- ROM: none of ankle; okay for toe ROM
- Weightbearing: Non-weightbearing
- Strengthening: None

### **Phase II: 2-6 weeks**

- Brace: Transition to walking boot full time except for during exercises and hygiene
- ROM: Active ROM of ankle only, emphasis on dorsiflexion
  - > Avoid passive inversion and eversion
  - > Avoid full range plantarflexion
- Weightbearing: Non-weightbearing
- Strengthening: intrinsic foot strengthening only; no ankle strengthening

*\*Earlier weightbearing may be allowed depending on fracture pattern/surgical details\**

### **Phase III: 6-8 weeks**

- Brace: Walking boot - okay to remove for sleeping and exercises
- ROM: full dorsiflexion ROM, 75% plantarflexion without resistance
- Weightbearing: progress to WBAT in boot
- Strengthening/Exercises:
  - > Introduce proprioceptive exercises on even ground only
  - > Light soft tissue work
  - > Add lower extremity closed chain exercises in single plane

### **Phase IV: 8-12 weeks**

- Brace: wean out of boot; lace up ankle brace in athletic shoes if having adequate strength and gait pattern
- ROM: full
- Weightbearing: WBAT
- Strengthening/Exercises:
  - > Maintain flexibility/ROM
  - > Same as Phase III

### **Phase V: 12-16 weeks**

- Brace: none
- ROM: full
- Weightbearing: WBAT
- Strengthening/Exercises:
  - > Maintain flexibility/ROM
  - > Banded strengthening
  - > Progress closed chain exercises
  - > Progressive proprioceptive training
  - > Static and dynamic balance on varied surfaces
  - > Plyometrics

**Phase VI:**  
**16+ weeks**

- Brace: none
- ROM: full
- Weightbearing: WBAT
- Strengthening/Exercises:
  - > Initiate jogging/running
  - > Progress plyometric program to dynamic, multi-planar exercises
  - > Increase intensity and resistance on closed chain exercises
- Activity: return to activity
- Functional activities and sport-specific demands
- Return to sport after clearance by MD