

DR. JASON DEVRIES  
FOOT FUSIONS:

**TALONAVICULAR, SUBTALAR, DOUBLE (TN AND STJ), TRIPLE (TN, STJ, CC) POST-OP  
THERAPY PROTOCOL**

**Phase 1 – Early Protective Phase (0-10 weeks)**

Goals for Phase 1	Criteria for Progression to Phase 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Minimize effusion</li><li>ROM at home starting at weeks 6-8, instructed by physician</li><li>Follow weight bearing schedule to ensure healing and minimize inflammation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Physician clearance to begin outpatient physical therapy</li></ul>

**Brace and Weight Bearing**

- 0-2 weeks:** NWB in a splint
- 2-6 weeks:** NWB in a cast
- 6-10 weeks:** Wean into WBAT in a CAM boot
- 10-14 weeks:** Wean into WBAT in an articulating Axiom brace

**AROM**

- ROM exercises at weeks 6-8 instructed by physician office (plantar flexion and dorsiflexion)

**Modalities**

- Cryotherapy at home 3 x per day for 20 minutes each with ankle elevated above heart

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**Phase 2 – Intermediate Phase (10-14 weeks)**

Goals for Phase 2	Criteria for Progression to Phase 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start outpatient PT at 10-12 weeks post-op (PT to last 6-8 weeks total)</li> <li>WBAT out of boot and into shoe with Axiom brace</li> <li>Minimize effusion</li> <li>Increase core, hip and knee strength</li> <li>Safe gait with/without walking aid</li> <li>Scar tissue mobility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full weight bearing in brace pain-free</li> <li>Tolerate ankle isotonics pain-free</li> </ul>

**Bracing and Weight Bearing**

- Axiom brace on during all weight bearing activities per physician recommendation, including PT
- Work on WBAT weaning from boot and into Axiom brace to gradually increase time and distance without compensation

**AROM**

- Plantar flexion to equal uninvolved if possible
- Dorsiflexion may be increased due to Achilles lengthening
- Midfoot ABD and ADD 10-15 degrees

**Manual Therapy**

- Scar massage
- Grade 1, 2 joint mobilizations to unfused joints

**Strengthening**

- Stationary bike
- Progressive hip, ankle and core strengthening
- Ankle strengthening start isometric and work up to gentle isotonics
- Foot intrinsic strengthening

**Proprioception**

- Low level balance and proprioceptive exercises starting with double leg on a stable surface using UE support as needed

**Gait Training**

- Resume normal gait mechanics

**Aquatics**

- Initiate aquatic therapy program when incisions are closed and patient is safe to get in and out of the pool

**Modalities**

- Heat for stiffness as needed
- Cryotherapy after activity
- Other modalities as needed for pain and swelling

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**Phase 3 – Intermediate Phase (14-16 weeks)**

<b>Goals for Phase 3</b>	<b>Criteria for Progression to Phase 4</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full weight bearing without compensation</li> <li>• Wean from Axiom articulated brace at 14-16 weeks</li> <li>• Wear brace for "high risk" activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Normal ankle PROM</li> <li>• Normal gait</li> </ul>

**Brace and Weight Bearing**

- Wean from Axiom articulated brace at 14-16 weeks under PT guidance
- Axiom brace used for patient comfort only after weaning period is complete. Patient may choose to wear for "high risk" activity
- May require a rocker bottom shoe (optional)

**AROM**

- LE flexibility restored

**Strengthening**

- Bilateral heel raises progressing to unilateral heel raises
- Continue with PRE LE and core strength and to tolerance

**Proprioception**

- Stable surface decreasing UE support and progression to single leg balance
- Progression to unstable surfaces, perturbations and or dual tasking

**Gait Training Advanced**

- Ambulation without a walking aid, without compensation

**Modalities**

- Heat for stiffness as needed
- Cryotherapy after activity
- Other modalities as needed for pain and swelling

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PROTOCOL

**Phase 4 – Return to Function (16+ weeks)**

**Goals for Phase 4**

- Progress single leg muscle strength, endurance and balance
- Return to sport or work specific tasks
- Full strength

**Brace and Weight Bearing**

- Axiom brace used for patient comfort only after weaning period is complete. Patient may choose to wear for "high risk" activity

**Strengthening**

- Stationary bike or elliptical
- Unilateral gym strengthening program:
  - single leg
  - calf raises
  - single leg squats
  - eccentric leg press
  - step-up progression
  - multi-directional lunges

**Proprioception**

- Advanced proprioception on unstable surfaces with perturbations and/or dual tasking

**Modalities**

- Cryotherapy after activity

**Criteria for Return to Work, Function, Sport**

- **Weeks 20-24:** Return to function testing if required by physician
- Criteria:
  - pain-free
  - full ROM
  - minimal joint effusion
  - 5/5 MMT strength
  - jump/hop testing at 75% compared to uninvolved
  - display adequate ankle control with sport and/or work specific tasks

**Sport Related Activities**

- **20+ weeks:** Return to functional testing (optional)
- Add sport specific balance tasks as able
- **20 weeks:** start impact activities (running, cutting, and jumping)