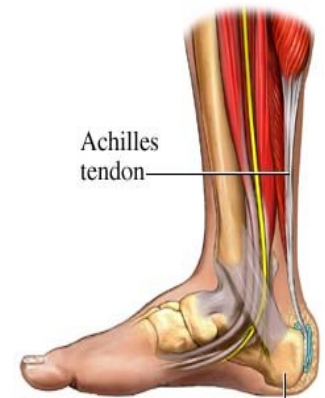


Achilles Tendinopathy

Patient guide for management and treatment

What is Achilles tendinopathy?

It is an overload of the Achilles tendon that runs at the back of your calf and is common in both active and sedentary people. It can be associated with a sudden increase of activity, while other times it comes on gradually.



Symptoms

- Pain
- Swelling
- Stiffness

If you are experiencing any additional symptoms including numbness, pins and needles or weakness in the leg, consult a medical professional.

What can you do to manage this?

To start with: If you find that even simple activities like walking take over a day to ease then you may find that rest and ice and appropriate pain relief are most beneficial at this stage

Relative rest

- Avoid putting the calf under excessive stretch
- Avoid parts of exercise training (such as sprints or uphill running) this may aggravate your pain.
- Activities like swimming and cycling - where you are not using your full body weight and if pain free can allow you to keep your current level of fitness.

Simple pain relief

Paracetamol or anti-inflammatories tablets or anti-inflammatory gel can help manage the pain initially. Please consult with your pharmacist.

Ice therapy

Ice applications can help manage the pain and the swelling. You can use an ice pack, or simply wrap some ice cubes or a packet of frozen peas into a tea towel. Apply for 15 minutes maximum up to 4 times a day as needed.

Do not use if you have any vascular conditions or reduced sensation.

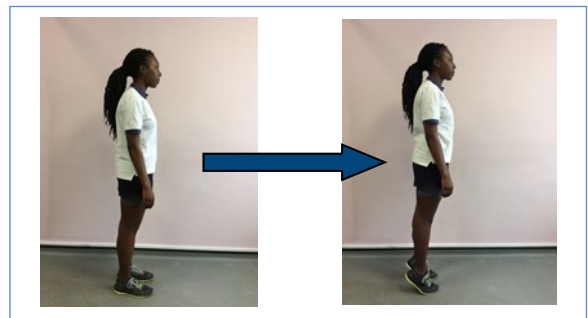
Orthotics

Wear footwear which is comfortable, supportive and doesn't press on the back of your ankle, or heel lifts from your local pharmacy may help to alleviate the stretch placed on the tendon when walking. Introduce your heel lifts gradually, as it can take some time for your foot to adjust.

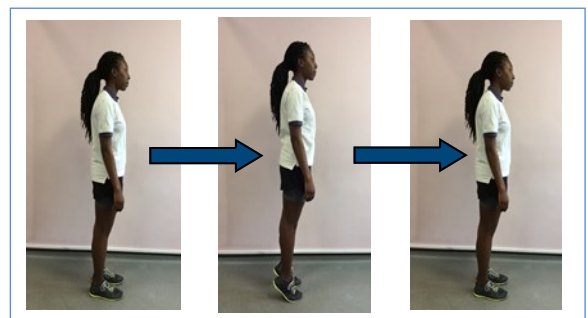
Exercises for the early stages

Doing exercises may be uncomfortable and may experience some pain. From a scale from 0-10 (with 0 being no pain at all and 10 being the worst possible pain you can imagine), you should expect to experience no more than 3 - keep that as your threshold.

1. To begin start with sustained calf raises, these can be held for up to 20 seconds and repeated three times during the day.



2. To progress: start performing slow calf raises and increase the weight you put on your Achilles by shifting your center of gravity to one side. Gradually you can increase the number of repetitions you are able to do.



3. To further progress: Stand on both feet, then push up onto the **non-affected** leg. Shift the weight onto the **affected** leg and 3 counts to lower your heels back down with knees straight. Keep a note of how many repetitions you have managed, making sure to rest in between then repeat another set. **You should do three sets in total, every other day.**

