WHY YOUR REHABILITATION PROGRAMME IS IMPORTANT

The cause of Achilles tendonosis is often associated with overuse. However, if this is coupled with weakness of some muscles and tightness of others, this could place extra strain on the Achilles tendon, making the problem worse. It is therefore essential that the exercises you have been given are performed correctly and at the required frequency as your practitioner will be relying on your input to achieve a successful outcome. A home exercise programme is usually effective in achieving successful rehabilitation of Achilles tendinosis.

FIND A PRACTITIONER

- British Association of Sports Rehabilitators and Trainers www.basrat.org/findapractitioner.asp
- British Chiropractic Association www.chiropractic-uk.co.uk/
- Physiotherapists in Sport www.acpsm.org.uk/find.php
- General Osteopathic Council www.osteopathy.org.uk/information/finding-an-osteopath/
- The Sports Massage Association www.thesma.org/find.aspx
- The Register of Exercise Professionals https://reps.netxtra.net/directory/

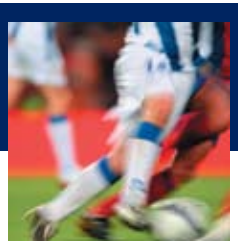
CONTACT DETAILS

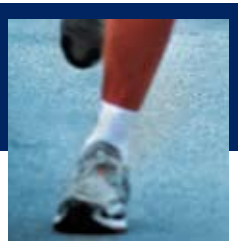
OTHER INFORMATION

WHO IS SPORTEX

We specialise in producing information for medical, health and exercise professionals on the subject of sport and exercise medicine. This includes subscription publications for practitioners and advice handouts for the public. All our material is written and reviewed by leading medical professionals. For more information visit www.sportex.net or telephone +44 (0)845 652 1906.

Exercises for achilles tendinosis






YOUR INJURY

Achilles tendonosis is a condition that affects the lower part of your Achilles tendon which connects your calf muscle to your heel. Achilles tendonosis (which may also be referred to as Achilles tendinopathy) involves degeneration of the tendon. The symptoms include:

- a gradual onset of pain during and after exercise over the tendon
- stiffness in the morning
- pain when you do a heel raise.

It is important that this injury is not allowed to become a long-term problem as this may lead to permanent tendon damage.

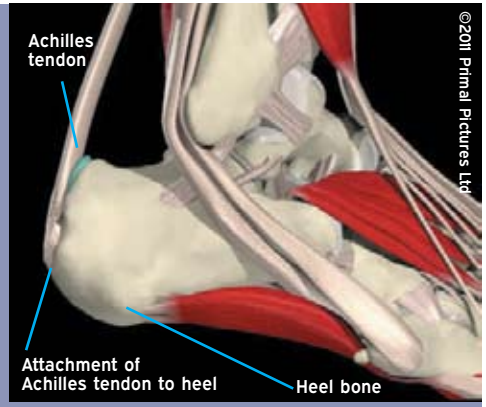


Diagram showing the ankle and Achilles tendon

TREATMENT

If the injury is treated early (i.e. at the inflammatory stage often known as Achilles tendinitis) then rest, ice therapy and ultrasound may be used to treat the inflammation. If the condition is more chronic then massage, ultrasound and stretching exercises may be employed to help break down the scar tissue which has built up. Your clinician may also recommend orthotics (shoe inserts).

Produced by sportex

Advice handout

Achilles tendinosis

YOUR REHABILITATION PROGRAMME

This programme has specific exercises to help stretch and strengthen muscles which may be weak. It is really important to ensure the exercises are performed with good technique and good postural control. Make sure to repeat the same number of exercises on both legs, that you are pain-free at all times and take care not to progress too quickly. We have given suggested sets and repetitions, but everyone is different so your practitioner may give guidance that is more specific to you.

WARM UP AND COOL DOWN

If muscles are tight, weak or injured, it is particularly important to warm up (unless advised otherwise by your practitioner) with a fast walk or a gentle jog at a pain-free pace for 5 minutes before you start your exercises. This increases your circulation and helps prepare the muscles for the activity to come. When you have finished your exercises, end the session with a 5 minute gentle walk or slow jog to allow your heart rate to slow down gradually.

STRETCHING EXERCISES

GASTROCNEMIUS STRETCH

Lean against a wall or chair for support, take a small step forward with one leg, stand with both heels in contact with floor. Bend the front knee (keeping the back knee straight) and your head up and hips forward. You should feel a stretch in your calf. Hold for 20-30 seconds.

SETS	REPS
1	8

SOLEUS STRETCH

Keep the same position as above but bend the back knee (instead of keeping it straight) while keeping the heels on the floor. Again you should feel this stretch in your calf area, although this stretches a different muscle. Hold for 20-30 seconds.

SETS	REPS
1	8

FLEXOR HALLUCIS LONGUS STRETCH

Sit on a chair in the position shown in the picture. Pull your toes back towards you so that your heel points outwards and you feel a stretch in the muscle that runs down the back of your calf and attaches to your big toe. Hold for 10-20 seconds. Perform on both feet.

SETS	REPS
1	8

ANKLE INVERTOR AND EVERTOR STRETCH

In the same position as above, this time turn your foot gently so the sole is facing the ceiling and then reverse the movement so the sole of your foot is turned towards the floor. Hold for 10-20 seconds. Perform on both feet.

SETS	REPS
1	8

STRENGTHENING AND STABILITY EXERCISES

continued overleaf

DOUBLE HEEL RAISES WITH SUPPORT (GASTROC MUSCLE)

Use a wall or chair for support. Rise up on your toes using both feet together and then lower your heels slowly to the floor. Rise up on two counts and lower on two counts. As long as you are able to perform this exercise without pain, move onto the next exercise.

SETS	REPS
3	15

DOUBLE HEEL RAISES WITH SUPPORT (SOLEUS MUSCLE)

Standing on a stair using the bannister for support, bend your knees and then rise up on two feet for two counts and lower for two counts. Don't let your heels drop below the level of the stair and keep your knees bent. If you can do this exercise without pain, move onto the next exercise.

SETS	REPS
3	15

DOUBLE (OR SINGLE) HEEL RAISES WITH SUPPORT

Stand on a stair using the bannister for support and rise up on two feet for two counts, then lower for three counts. As long as you are pain-free try lowering so your heels so they drop below the level of the stair. If this is pain free progress to one foot (as shown in the picture).

SETS	REPS
3	15

ECCENTRIC KNEE SQUAT

Using the back of a chair for support. Stand on your injured leg and slowly bend your knee as far as you are able keeping your heel on the floor. At the lowest point put down your other foot and using the muscles of the thigh return back to the starting position.

SETS	REPS
3	10