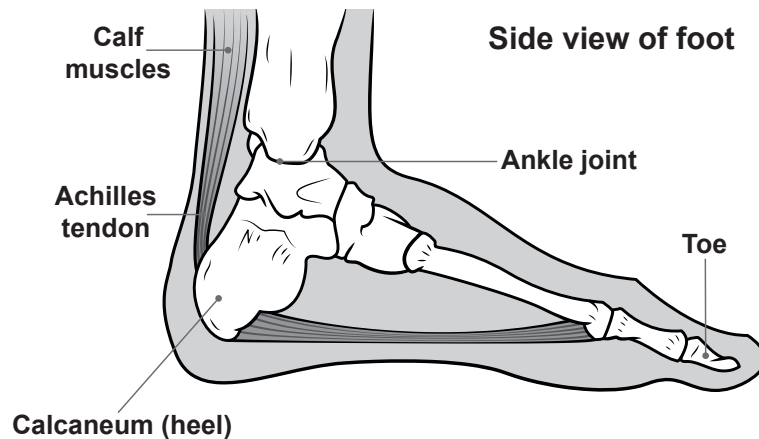


# Information about Achilles Tendinopathy

The aim of this leaflet is to give you some understanding of the problems you have with your Achilles tendon and to provide some advice on how to manage this. It should be used in conjunction with the information you may have been given by your healthcare professional.



## What is Achilles Tendinopathy?

Achilles tendinopathy is a condition that can cause pain, swelling, stiffness and weakness of the Achilles tendon.

## What are the possible symptoms?

- Pain generally tends to be worse in the morning, or during and after exercise.
- Some swelling and, or pain can occur around the tendon and calf area.
- The tendon may be very tender to touch and you may have increased discomfort wearing shoes that press against it.

## What can contribute to the causes of Achilles Tendinopathy?

- Being overweight.
- Wearing unsuitable footwear e.g. flip flops, high heels, or sandals which don't support the feet or changes in the heel height of your shoes.
- Foot position such as high arches or flat feet make it more difficult for the Achilles tendon to work properly.
- Overloading of the tendon with, for example, prolonged periods of standing, walking, running, jumping and increased intensity of training or sports.
- Stiffness or injury to any surrounding area such as the ankle, foot or calf.
- Tightness in the muscles up the back of your leg.
- Occasionally it can be caused by inflammatory diseases.

## What tests may be done?

In the majority of cases of Achilles tendon pain, you do not need an x ray or any other tests to confirm what is wrong. The main way to diagnose an Achilles tendon problem is through what you tell us and examining your leg.

## What else can be done?

If your pain does not get better after a period of 3 months of following the exercises and advice in this leaflet, see a healthcare professional who can access your foot and leg and may recommend further treatment.

## What can you do to help the pain in your Achilles Tendon?

- Have patience, most people's Achilles tendon pain does get better by following the advice given in this leaflet but it may take several months to get better.
- Follow the exercises in this leaflet and keep active as we know that rest does not help this problem to improve.
- Aim for a healthy body weight.
- Avoid wearing unsuitable footwear that is unsupportive or very flat. Shoes with shock absorbing properties are suitable.
- Follow the advice from your community pharmacist or other healthcare professional about taking medication. It is important to take any medication regularly.
- Ice can sometimes be helpful in the early stages of Achilles tendinopathy to reduce pain. Only apply an ice pack if wrapped in a damp towel and only for around 5 – 10 minutes. Please check your skin regularly as ice can burn.

## Exercises



Stand on the edge of a step and hold the position. Progress to going on to your tip toes on both feet and then on the painful side only. If this is too difficult you can start on the ground.

Perform the exercises with your knees straight and with your knees bent. Try to aim for 3 x 15 repetitions per day. Expect some discomfort while performing these exercises however, if it gets extremely painful, we would advise you to stop for a few days and then begin again.



**Hold each stretch for at least 30 seconds and repeat 5 -10 times.**