

Our highly skilled podiatrists

are registered with the Health Care Professionals Council (HCPC) and members of the College of Podiatrists. The practice is accredited by the College of Podiatrists (CoP).

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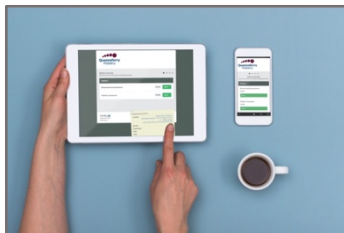
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Professional and caring podiatrists

Achilles Tendinopathy



Treatment Advice

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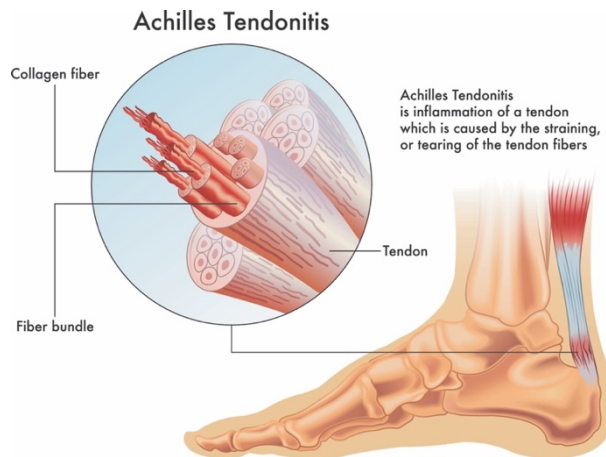
www.hcpc-uk.org



What is Achilles Tendinopathy?

Achilles tendinopathy is a condition that causes pain, swelling and stiffness of the tendon that runs down the back of the lower leg to the heel.

It is thought to be caused by repeated tiny injuries (known as micro trauma) to the Achilles tendon. If not caught early, it can be a difficult injury to cure.



Treatments

Achilles tendinopathy generally responds very well to conservative treatment as long as it is diagnosed and treated early.

A podiatrist may treat the achilles tendinopathy by giving advice on footwear or/and putting heel lifts or orthotics into the patient's shoes.

What causes it?

- overuse of the Achilles tendon
- training or exercising wearing inappropriate footwear
- having poor training or exercising techniques
- making a change to your training programme, e.g. rapidly increasing the intensity of your training and how often you train
- training or exercising on hard or sloped surfaces
- being overweight can put extra stress on the tendon

What can help?

There are a number of things that may lead to these repeated tiny injuries to the achilles tendon. The most important one is to rest the tendon. Reduce (or stop) the activity that triggered your symptoms.

If your pain eases, you may be able to do some gentle stretches. If you can, carry on putting weight on your leg by standing and doing some gentle walking.

Avoid uphill and downhill running until the pain has gone.

The Achilles tendon is the largest and strongest tendon in the body. When the calf muscles flex, the Achilles tendon pulls on the heel. This movement allows us to stand on our toes when walking, running, or jumping.

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS), such as ibuprofen, may be taken to calm the inflammatory process in the tendon.

Stretching exercises for the calf muscles will be given help loosen the calf muscle and Achilles tendon so that the tendon is not under as much stress during normal daily walking activities. The stretching should not be done however if it causes pain in the Achilles tendon.

Physiotherapy can help to strengthen and stretch your Achilles tendon.

As a last resort, if the pain does not resolve and you choose to have surgery, this may involve removing damaged areas of your tendon and repairing what's left of it.

Symptoms

- increasing pain, usually at the back of your leg or heel
- stiffness in the tendon
- swelling at the back of your ankle
- tenderness when you touch the tendon
- a grating noise or creaking feeling (crepitus) when you move your ankle