



Polyclinics  
SingHealth

# Achilles Tendon Injury



*Disclaimer: Please note that the instructions shown are strictly for general information only.  
If you have any queries, kindly check with your healthcare provider.*



SCAN ME

# A

## What is Achilles tendon injury?



Achilles tendon is a band of tissue connecting calf muscles to the heel bone.

It transmits forces produced by the calf muscles to the heel bone.

In Achilles tendon injury (also known as Achilles tendinopathy), there is a strain and inflammation of the tendon.

This condition is common in runners and people who play sports, such as tennis or basketball.

# B

## What are the common causes of Achilles tendon injury?

Achilles tendon injury can happen after repetitive overuse or overstrain.

This includes:

- Sudden increase in activity (e.g. walk, jog or run a lot more than usual)
- Sudden increase in sport training frequency, duration or intensity
- Poor footwear or worn-out shoes
- Sudden weight gain
- Poor flexibility of the muscle and joint of the lower limbs



## How can you prevent Achilles tendon injury?

There are ways to reduce the risk of sustaining an Achilles tendon injury:

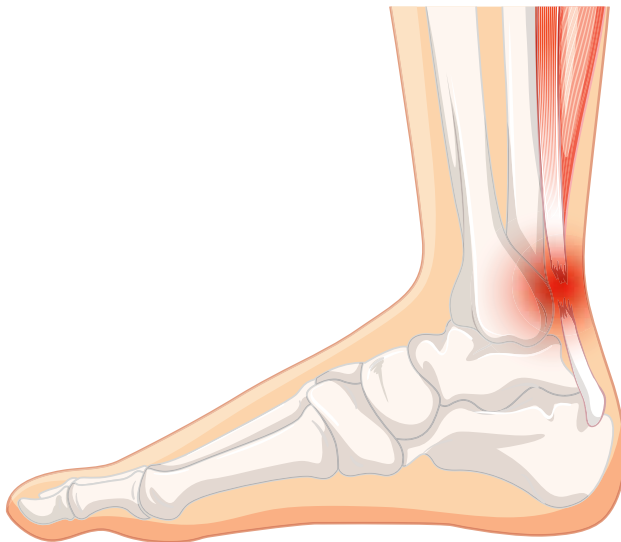
- Increase your exercise intensity or duration gradually
- Wear comfortable footwear with adequate cushioning and arch support
- Replace worn-out shoes
- Improve the strength and flexibility of your calf muscles



## What are the signs & symptoms of Achilles tendon injury?

Pain around the area where the tendon attaches to the heel bone, which typically develops gradually.

Morning pain is common as you walk the first few steps out of bed.





## How long does it take to recover?

The duration of recovery depends on the extent of injury as well as your compliance to the treatment programme.

Lack of proper treatment and continued participation in aggravating activity can cause the injury to worsen and to be more vulnerable to tear. The pain can become more intense and frequent. A complete tear (rupture) will usually require surgical repair.



## You should seek medical attention early if you have...

- Intense ankle pain or movement restriction following a fall or trauma
- Difficulty walking or weight bear (support body weight) on the injured leg
- Prolonged morning ankle stiffness
- A hot swollen ankle joint
- Rapid worsening of ankle pain



## Do you need an imaging scan?

Imaging scan is not needed to diagnose Achilles tendon injury. Diagnosis can be made clinically through history and physical examination.

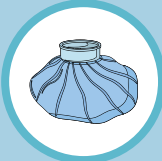



Ultrasound scan or Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) may be carried out by specialists only when necessary.





# What are the treatment options?

Depending on the condition, your healthcare provider may recommend:

| Activity modification and icing   | Medications   | Physiotherapy   | Specialist referral  |
|---|---|---|--|
|    |    |    |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adjust your training programme or exercise intensity to avoid pain flare up</li><li>• Apply icing or cold compress over the Achilles tendon area for 10 minutes when the pain is aggravated (e.g after prolonged walking)</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paracetamol and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) can reduce pain and inflammation</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appropriate exercise programme and soft tissue treatment can improve your pain and regain function</li><li>• Physical modalities such as extracorporeal shockwave therapy (ESWT) can stimulate healing of the Achilles tendon</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Achilles tendon injury usually does not need specialist treatment</li><li>• Your doctor will refer you to see a specialist only when necessary for further investigation and treatment</li></ul> |

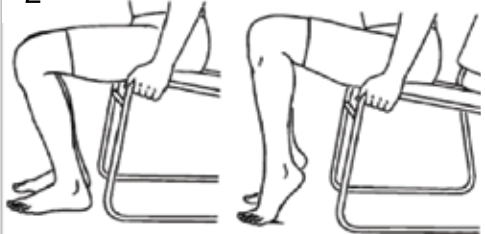


## Simple home exercises:

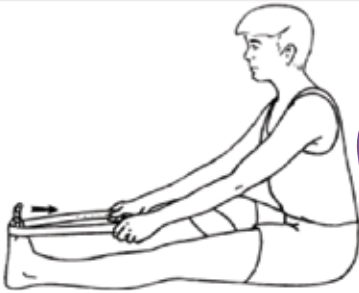
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2



3



**You may perform these exercises  
2-3 times a day:**

1. Gentle ankle range of motion exercise: **10 repetitions**
2. Seated calf raises: **Hold 10 seconds, 10 repetitions**
3. Calf stretching using a towel: **Hold 30 seconds, 3 repetitions**

Note:

[illegible]

[illegible]

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