

Achilles Tendinopathy



Information for Patients

This leaflet has been written to give you the right information about Achilles tendinopathy and what you can do to help with your recovery.

What is Achilles tendinopathy?

Firstly, Achilles tendinopathy is not a dangerous issue. It normally relates to pain around the back of the ankle.

Achilles tendinopathy refers to an irritation of the tendon (which attach muscle to bone), from your calf muscles (lower leg muscles), to your heel bone.

What causes Achilles tendinopathy?

Achilles tendinopathy is a common complaint and is often associated with a change in the amount of work you might be asking or have asked of your foot and the tendons that attach around it.

In most cases, either doing more of something (walking/ hiking/running), doing something new or different (new job or hobby) or simply doing less and then getting back into activity (e.g. heavy gardening in the spring after doing less in the winter) can be enough to cause an irritation. Carrying excessive body weight along with some of the above causes can be a factor.

What are the common symptoms?

Pain: Achilles tendinopathy will typically cause discomfort around the back of the ankle but this may travel up the calf or to the underneath of the foot for some people. Discomfort is often noticed when standing, walking or taking weight on the foot especially first thing in the morning.

Other areas becoming sore: Discomfort will normally make you use the foot/ankle differently (e.g. you may limp) and sometimes this can make other areas become sore.

What can I do to help myself?

Calm it down: At the moment, there will be things your foot/ankle likes to do and some that it is less happy to do. Calming it down simply means looking at the things it doesn't like and trying to make some adjustments or changes to make it easier for yourself.

For example, you might find that walking the dog for 30 minutes or putting your foot to the floor first thing in the morning may be sore. By taking the dog for a shorter walk or taking a few breaks whilst walking might help; just like 'warming the foot up' first thing in the morning with some exercises or wearing slippers may be useful things to consider whilst it is unhappy.

Pain control: Applying something warm/cold around your ankle may be useful in helping with some of the pain (do remember to wrap your hot water bottle/ cold pack in a towel before applying it to your skin to avoid burns).

Build it back up again: Movement is medicine for your body and your ankle is no different. Calming the issue down (as described above) is often the best place to start and sometimes this might take a few weeks to help. Once your ankle feels a little calmer, it is a good idea to start to 'build it back up again'. What this means is that once the ankle is able to tolerate some gentle exercise, then it is worth starting some.

Will it get better?

For most people, Achilles pain will not be a pleasant experience but reassuringly, it does have the potential to get better. By understanding the issue as best you can and by adjusting what is sore to then allow you to explore some exercise/s, is often the best formula for success.

If you would like to know more about Achilles tendinopathy or find a greater choice of exercises, you can explore our dedicated webpage.

Search online: [Norfolk and Waveney MSK services](#) 'achilles tendinopathy'

Exercises



Whilst sitting, raise your heels off the ground into the tip toe position. Hold this position for approx. 45-60 seconds. Repeat 2-3 times.

Complete little and often throughout the day.



When the first exercise feels that is it getting too easy, try this more advanced one.

Sit with a tray or board on your lap. Place a weight onto the tray/board and raise your heels up off the ground. Slowly (3-5 seconds) lower your heels down again.

Repeat 2-3 times little and often throughout the day.



If you would like this leaflet in large print, audio, Braille or in a different language, please contact us on **01502 445447**.

Jei šios publikacijos kopija noretumete gauti savo kalba prašome susisiekti su telefono numeriu: **01502 445447**.

Jezeli chcieliby Panstwo otrzymac niniejsza publikacje w tlumaczeniu na jezyk polski, prosimy o kontakt z pod numerem telefonu: **01502 445447**.

Pokud byste chteli kopi této publikace ve Vašem jazyce, prosím kontaktujte ovou na telefonním čísle **01502 445447**.

Bu yayinin kendi dilinizde bir nüshasini isterseniz, lütfen **01502 445447** nolu telefondan ile temasa geçiniz.

Se pretender uma cópia desta publicação no seu idioma, por favor contacte no número **01502 445447**.