



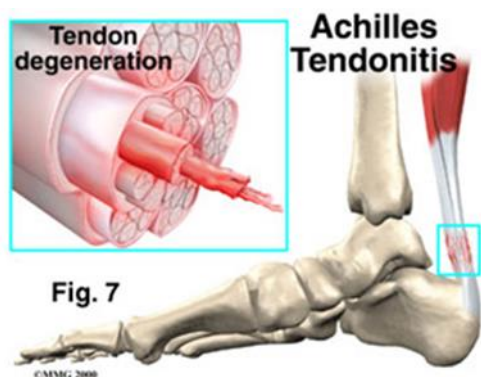
Achilles tendinopathy

What is it?

Achilles tendinopathy (or tendinosis) is painful scarring and degeneration of the Achilles tendon. It is not an inflammatory process but is often the result of chronic Achilles tendonitis. Many patients develop a tender lump in their Achilles tendon at the back of the ankle and heel. The Achilles tendon does not have good blood supply so chronic Achilles tendinopathy can be slow to heal and stubborn to treat.

What causes it?

Sometimes we can't identify a specific cause for Achilles tendonitis. However, most Achilles tendonitis is an overuse injury. Common risk factors include: sudden increase in running or jumping, tight calf muscles, worn out shoes, flat feet, abnormal alignment of the leg, leg length discrepancy, and even some antibiotics.



Treatment:

- Relative rest - decrease jumping and running (especially hills)
- Cross train (ie: swimming, water running, elliptical, cycling, resistance training, etc.)
- Yoga – for flexibility and strengthening
- Physical Therapy – eccentric exercises
- Good footwear, heel lifts
- Walking boot
- Foot orthotics
- Steroid injection – rarely used (due to high risk of tendon rupture)
- Nitroglycerin patch
- Shockwave therapy
- Orthobiologic injections – Prolotherapy or Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP) injections
- Surgery – occasionally needed if conservative treatment fails

R. J. De Vos, et al. "Platelet-rich plasma injection for chronic Achilles tendinopathy: a randomized controlled trial," JAMA, vol. 303, p. 144–149, 2010.