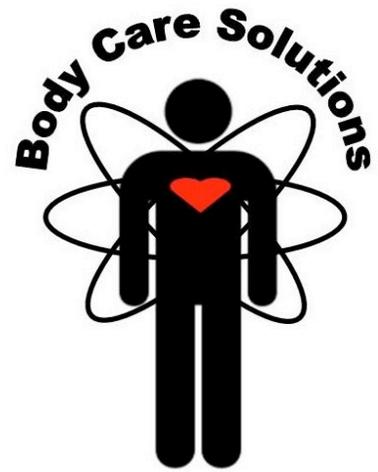
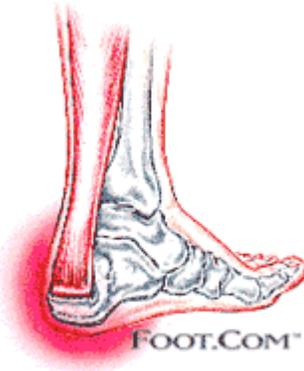


ACHILLES TENDONITIS

Definition

Achilles tendonitis or tendonsynovitis causes inflammation and degeneration of the Achilles tendon. The Achilles tendon is the large tendon located in the back of the leg that inserts into the heel. The pain caused by Achilles tendonitis can develop gradually without a history of trauma. The pain can be a shooting pain, burning pain, or even an extremely piercing pain. Achilles tendonitis should not be left untreated due to the danger that the tendon can become weak and ruptured.



Achilles Tendonitis is aggravated by activities that repeatedly stress the tendon, causing inflammation. In some cases even prolonged periods of standing can cause symptoms. It is a common problem often experienced by athletes, particularly distance runners. Achilles Tendonitis is a difficult injury to treat in athletes due to their high level of activity and reluctance to stop or slow down their training.

Individuals who suffer from Achilles tendonitis often complain that their first steps out of bed in the morning are extremely painful. Another common complaint is pain after steps are taken after long periods of sitting. This pain often lessens with activity.

Cause

There are several factors that can cause Achilles tendonitis. The most common cause is over-pronation. Over-pronation occurs in the walking process, when the arch collapses upon weight bearing, adding stress on the Achilles tendon.

Other factors that lead to Achilles tendonitis are improper shoe selection, inadequate stretching prior to engaging in athletics, a short Achilles tendon, direct trauma (injury) to the tendon, and heel bone deformity.

Treatment and Prevention

Athletes, particularly runners, should incorporate a thorough stretching program to properly warm-up the muscles. Calf raises can increase the strength in the Gastrocnemius and Soleus muscles in the back of the leg, decreasing pain.

If acute pain, runners can apply ice after the activity and avoid any uphill climbs. Sufferers will require biomechanical correction of their foot to prevent the condition progressing.

Temporary treatment may include heel cups or raises to reduce stress and pressure on the Achilles tendon. Prescription of stretching and strengthening the calf muscles. Fitting of a custom made orthotic device to control over-pronation, support the longitudinal arch, and correct the heel alignment in the foot, thus reducing stress on the Achilles tendon.

If the problem persists, call Body Care Solutions on (03) 9699 2998 and consult your Podiatrist or Orthotist.