

Tendonitis and Tendonsis

Tendonitis/Tendonsis

- Tendons are tough, flexible bands of fibrous tissue that connect muscles to bones
- Tendonitis is an acute injury which is an inflammation of the tendon
- If pain persists for more than a few weeks, it is more likely that the injury is tendonsis, a more common and chronic injury
- Tendonsis (also called tendonopathy) is when the tendon is damaged at a cellular level and becomes weaker and degenerated. It is not an inflammatory condition.
- Treatment is different for these conditions: Tendonitis requires anti-inflammatory type treatment, tendonsis requires specific strengthening exercises



Interesting facts

- Morning soreness is a strong indicator of tendonsis
- Tendons are slow to heal due to their low blood supply
- Common tendons to be affected include: Achilles tendon, extensor tendons of the forearm (tennis elbow), flexor tendons of the forearm (golfers elbow), patellar tendon (jumpers knee)

Management options

- Braces/taping for support and to de-load the tendon
- Eccentric (lengthening phase of muscle contraction) exercises to strengthen the tendon
- Cortisone injections can help reduce inflammation
- Anti-inflammatory creams/patches or medication may be prescribed by your GP

Hints for self-management

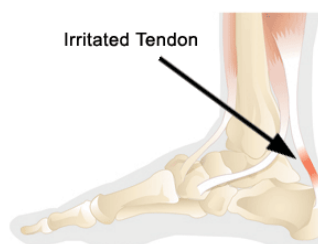
This handout was prepared by **Sydney Sports and Orthopaedic Physiotherapy** and is intended as a general information service. Please note that the information provided is not intended as a substitute for advice from a registered physician or healthcare professional. If symptoms persist, please consult your doctor.

- For an acute injury follow the RICER principles:
R = Rest
I = Ice wrapped in towel (20mins every 2 hours for the first 48 hours post injury)
C = Compression
E = Elevation
R = Review with a health professional
- For tendonsis, or non-acute injury:
Eccentric exercises
Gentle stretching
Correct biomechanical problems i.e. posture/footwear
Gradual return to exercise

What you can expect/look out for

- Tenderness directly over the tendon
- Swelling with an acute injury
- Thickening of the tendon with a chronic injury (more than 3 months)
- Pain on first moving after rest
- Pain may ease once area is warmed up, then become sore again once area has cooled
- Eccentric exercises take 12 weeks to strengthen the tendon to original levels

Achilles Tendonsis/Tendinitis



More information

- Eccentric loading exercises have been proven to strengthen and remodel chronically damaged tendons
- Ultrasound imaging can differentially diagnose a tendon injury
- De-loading the tendon in the initial phases will help with pain. These can include taping, heel raises and orthotics
- New techniques are using autologous (your own) blood injections to help treat chronic tendonses

Sydney Sports and Orthopaedic Physiotherapy
Level 7, 139 Macquarie St, Sydney NSW 2000
P. +61 2 9252 5770
E. reception@ssop.com.au
W. www.ssop.com.au